JOHN BULL

Vol. I. No. 18. | SATURDAY, OCT. 6th, 1906. | ONE PENNY.

[Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper.]

The world is a bundle of hay;
Mankind are the asses who pull;
Each tugs it a different way,
And the greatest of all is John Bull

—BYRON.

Edited by
HORATIO BOTTOMLEY, M.P.

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"JOHN BULL'S" CHRISTMAS-BOX SCHEME.

£5,000 FOR OUR READERS.

The success of John Bull has been unique. Nothing like it has been known in modern journalism. It is the talk of the trade. The public wanted a change from namby-pamby rubbish, vulgar personalities, ponderous platitudes. The man in the street wanted an organ. John Bull supplied that want.

There are still, however, certain people who, apparently, have not heard of our paper. Otherwise, of course, they would buy it. In fact, they would not be happy till they got it. This state of things must be remedied. How is it to be done? There is but one way—advertising. Now, advertising costs money, whatever method you adopt. Ask any society leader, or politician, or philanthropist. So we have set aside another

FIVE THOUSAND POUNDS.

How shall we spend it? Here is an idea. We will, at Christmas next, distribute

ONE THOUSAND FIVE POUND NOTES

amongst the thousand readers who between now and then, in our opinion, render us the best service in pushing the sale of John Bull.

Will you have a try for one? "Yes," you say, "but what am I to do?" We will tell you. Look around and think. Are you in an office or a factory? Well, what about the chap next to you, and the one in front, and the other one, over there! Just say to him, very quietly and sweetly,

"Have You Read 'John Bull'?"

And when you go to lunch or dinner, just take the paper out of your pocket, carelessly exposing the title, chuckle over the "Bulls' Eyes," or the "Open Post-Cards," or some other feature, and then, addressing the company generally, ask

"Have You Read 'John Bull'?"

Look at that individual, standing at the corner of the street, and that one, waiting for a 'bus, and that other one, in the corner of the car.
Put the question to him,

"Have You Read 'John Bull'?"

Then, there is the local newsagent. Ask him about the paper. Ask him to push it for all he is worth. And the bookstall clerk. Ask him to oblige you by placing it in front. Tell him it means a fiver to you. Don't, of course, attempt to bribe him. Simply say you are not greedy or selfish.

Again, when friends come to tea, or you visit them, don't waste time talking about the weather, but come at once to the point—

"Have You Read 'John Bull'?"

Then read them a bit from your copy—first warning them not to have any cake in their mouths, for fear of choking, as the jokes are trotted out.

And when you write to your aunt or your uncle, your sister or brother, cousin or sweetheart, just put a "P.S." at the end—

"Have You Read 'John Bull'?"

And when the rate collector, or the landlord, or the gas-meter man calls, or the postman, or the dustman, or even the cat's meat man—always the same old question,

"Have You Read 'John Bull'?"

Of course, in all these cases, you will follow up by telling what a ripping paper it is; how long the week seems till it comes round—and anything else that occurs to you at the moment.

Don't be disheartened if now and then you get—a rude reply. Remember the story of the young man who told a friend that whenever he found himself alone with a pretty girl, he asked her to let him kiss her. "Surely," said his friend, "you must get a lot of rebuffs?" "Oh, yes," he replied, "but I also get a lot of kissing."

Now go ahead and see what you can do for us.

"But what about that Five Pound Note?" you say. Yes, we had almost forgotten to tell you.

HERE IS OUR SCHEME.

Between now and Tuesday, December 18th, you must let us know what you are doing for us. Report to us as often as ever you like. We will send you forms and envelopes for the purpose, if you ask us for them. But you need not use them. Ordinary letters will do. We shall carefully note what you say, and shall also be happy to consider any suggestions you may make.

On MONDAY, DECEMBER 24th,

ONE THOUSAND FIVE-POUND NOTES

will be distributed equally amongst the one thousand readers who, in our opinion, have rendered us the best service. Of course, the main test will be the obtaining of new readers. You get them—and we will keep them. But we are aware that, in many cases, it may be impracticable to actually trace the result of your efforts. That, however, need not dismay you. We will judge of your work, fairly and generously.

We need not enlarge upon the scores of things which a Five Pound Note at Christmas time will do. Each reader will work that out for himself. The bank notes will be sent by registered post, the number of each note being carefully taken. They will arrive by first post on the morning of Monday, December 24th—Christmas Eve.

But no report will be considered which arrives after Tuesday, December 18th.

All Communications respecting this Scheme must be addressed to

The Secretary,
John Bull, Ltd.,
Finsbury House,
London, E.C.

JOHN BULL.

Politics without Party—Criticism without Cant;
Without Fear or Favour—Rancour or Rant.

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NOTICES, &c.

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All editorial inquiries MUST BE MADE BY LETTER.

All matter appearing in JOHN BULL, *unless otherwise signed, is editorial.*

TO ADVERTISERS.

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John Bull's Biscuits.

AWARD No. 54.

For lurking outside his church at dead of night, and firing upon alleged burglars, in a Christian spirit, and then offering medical relief,

THE REV. FORBES PHILLIPS
(Vicar of Gorleston)
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

AWARD No. 55.

For emblazoning paupers' counterpanes with their gorgeous crest, at an additional cost of half-a-crown a time,

THE WINDSOR GUARDIANS
TAKE THE BISCUIT.

AWARD No. 56

For stating that the shares of the South Holland Mortgage Bank "dropped 100 per cent." on the arrest of one of the directors,

THE EDITOR OF THE
"PALL MALL GAZETTE"
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

AWARD No. 57.

For expressing the opinion that Waring and Gillow's have inspired our recent attacks, as a good advertisement for the firm,

THE EDITOR OF "THE RIALTO"
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

THE WORLD, THE FLESH, AND THE DEVIL.

[*The Editor discourses upon passing events and topics of the day.*]

And so we were right about Mr. Chamberlain. It will be remembered that weeks ago we stated that his illness was of a much more serious character than was generally supposed; and when it was announced that he would address a public meeting in the middle of October—despite Mr. Austen Chamberlain's confirmation of the report—we ventured to assert "he will do nothing of the kind." We repeat—and we do so with sincere regret—that the condition of the right hon. gentleman is one which gives cause for serious concern. Why this conspiracy of silence?

We observe that Mr. Austen Chamberlain is again issuing "reassuring" statements. There has "never been any cause for serious anxiety," he says. Well, it is only ten days ago since Mr. Austen Chamberlain ridiculed our prediction that his father would not address that Midland meeting. "He will most certainly keep the engagement," we were told. We can only assume that Mr. Chamberlain's family are being kept in the dark as to the real state of affairs. We cannot believe they would wilfully deceive the people. Mr. Chamberlain is *very* ill.

The public will read with regret and surprise the letter from the Home Secretary which we publish elsewhere, in reference to the Watt case. Mr. Gladstone, having reduced Mr. Watt's sentence to one year, now declines to give him the benefit of the "good marks"

he has earned in prison. He says that after consultation with the judge who tried the case he has decided that Mr. Watt must undergo one full year's imprisonment. What does this mean? Evidently, that both Mr. Gladstone and the judge think that Mr. Watt was guilty, but that the sentence was excessive. Then why did the judge pass it? And *is* "five years" too severe for inciting to murder? The whole thing is most unsatisfactory—and more will be heard of it when Parliament meets.

We learn with satisfaction that the Spanish Government has permitted the reopening of the "Modern School" in Madrid—although it is still holding all Señor Ferrer's private fortune and the capital of the school. Of course, the restoration of the school may be the first step in the right direction, or, on the other hand, it may be a mere ruse to divert public attention from the case. In the meantime, Señor Ferrer is awaiting his trial, for an offence of which, according to our information, he is absolutely innocent, but for which the penalty, on conviction, would be death. It is the Spanish Dreyfus case.

As we ventured to predict, during the debate on the Address, the Irish Party is not prepared to accept payment from the Government on the instalment system. Mr. John Redmond—as shrewd as he is eloquent—knows that, apart from the many other drawbacks of such a system, and even assuming that no default were made in any instalment, full payment would have to be spread over too long a period to ensure the certainty of collection. And so, just as the Government is scratching its head over the Socialist warning, he weighs in with a very candid reminder that it is time to "cut the cackle and come to the 'osses," in regard to Irish policy. And then the Temperance party—(just imagine the irony of the phrase, as though there were a Drunkard Party!)—they are on the feed, too (for temperance reformers *do* feed!) for their share of the spoils of victory; and then there are all the "Anti's" after *their* reward! By general agreement, apparently, the Nonconformist Conscience is to get all it can out of this first Session, by means of the Education Bill, and then it is to be a scramble amongst the rest. We predict that the Irish will come out on top—so far as the Commons are concerned. But what of the House of Lords? There's the rub!

Home Rule or no Home Rule, we can see no sense, and precious little principle, in such displays of petty disloyalty as is credited to Alderman Kelly of Dublin. This gentleman, as a guest of Alderman Cotton, was being conveyed with other guests in a steamer to the scene of the opening of the new drainage works. He was the last to arrive aboard, and seeing the Ensign with the Union Jack quartered on it flying at the stern, "he immediately produced a clasp knife and cut the strings, the flag falling into the Liffey."

Mr. Redmond's point of view as to legislative schemes for Ireland is clear and easily understood. He knows what he wants, and so far as his leadership counts in Parliament, he is determined to get it. But Mr. Redmond would never have stooped to such a silly outrage as that committed by Alderman Kelly. He knows, if Mr. Kelly does not, that this sort of thing does the Irish cause harm in England, and, after all, it is the English voter he has to conquer, on a plain issue of justice or injustice. These baby tricks should be confined to Irish nurseries.

Sir Walter Gilbey has set some of our rich men an excellent example by building cottages and conveying them to trustees to be let to the aged poor at a rental of sixpence a week singly, or ninepence a week for a married couple. The cost of philanthropy of this sort is comparatively small. Even the richest men would not be too poor to afford it, and if it became operative through the length and breadth of the land, as it might well be, it would go a long way to solve the problem of the aged poor—at all events in the country.

Undoubtedly the correspondence of the Labour members of Parliament involves in postages a severe tax on their slender resources. We are glad, therefore, that Mr. J. T. Macpherson, M.P., has had the courage to announce that he is too poor to pay for postage stamps, and that unless his correspondents enclose a stamped addressed envelope for a reply he cannot undertake to answer their communications. Other Labour members might make a similar rule with advantage. Perhaps the Government may yet find the means of franking M.P.'s letters.

The Belle of Mayfair, Miss Edna May, has resigned £200 a week because the fiancée of the Hon. Wentworth Bruce, son and heir of Lord Aberdare, has been advertised in larger letters than herself, and has been supplied with a song in which she has made a hit. Miss May is not at all jealous, and she is evidently not in need of the money. What she complains of is that in strict accordance with theatrical custom, and in view of the prominence given to Miss Clifford's name, her own should have been announced in letters at least ten feet high. Being a star, she was, in fact, entitled to a sky sign.

But, after all, there is a better way to the larger advertisement and the more tremendous salary. She is free. She is pretty. She is demure. Why not captivate the noble heart of a duke, and after a series of daily columns of special interviews, marry him, start a honeymoon in a balloon, or a coal mine, or a gipsy van, and return to the stage in a blaze of glory, with a coronet on her head, and diamond clusters on her feet?

We congratulate Mr. Seymour Hicks upon his public spirit and pluck in bringing to justice the cowardly wretch who has been uttering foul slanders against the fair name of one of the most charming little girls upon the stage. This action by Mr. Hicks was prompted by a three-fold sense of duty. First, it was due to his profession; secondly, to his own wife, Miss Ellaline Terriss—the emblem and embodiment of all that is pure; and, thirdly, it was due to little Phyllis Dare and her family. It is one of the penalties of public life that a man's character and private affairs are ever on the gossips' tongues. But the demon of calumny has been particularly active of late in connection with little Miss Dare's return to school—and we trust Mr. Hicks will carry out his intention to bring to book some of the other, and more responsible, cowards who have been spreading poisonous slanders for the past two months. Bravo, Seymour!

Actors, as a body, should rally round Mr. Hicks in this crisis, and make a firm stand for the good name of their profession. Here, for instance, is the *Weekly Dispatch* announcing that a "startling and daring exposure of the English stage is about to be made," which, it is said, will "create a ferment of horror and excitement never before equalled." Mr. Arthur Applin, whose pen will stir the hearts of the public, is "an English Upton Sinclair." Already rumours have gone round theatrical circles, and "managers are in a flutter of excitement, some quaking in their shoes," and so on, all about a new story named "The Chorus Girl," appearing in another journal owned by the Harmsworths. Were the leading members of the profession to decline any further interchange of courtesies with Lord Northcliffe and his

John Bull's Christmas-Box Scheme—*See Page 2 of Cover.*

entire retinue, even the *esprit de corps* of the Press should hardly induce it to condemn the mime and defend the journalist.

The Spanish papers are busier than ever with the news that Queen Ena of Spain ("Quinina," as they call her in Royal circles, where they joke) is anticipating a happy event. As we have said before, these things may be a guarantee of good faith, but they are not necessarily for publication; and we should not have referred again to the matter if the English newspapers were not also in haste with the joyful tidings. It is unfair for the discerning reporter to cause any lady public embarrassment. Besides, there is many a slip, etc.

The latest dictum of Mrs. Sarah Grand, she of the "Heavenly Twins," is that neither man nor woman should enter the bond of marriage except in a spirit of self-sacrifice. This is not a cheerful evangel for those who seek for joy and not for martyrdom in the matrimonial lottery. Courage, however, is the fear of being thought a coward, and to the end of time the sexes will continue to brave all the chances in the blessed hope that, as husbands and wives, they will never, never have to do things that should be left undone.

Seeing that the magistrates do their best all over the country to make the Vaccination Act an absurdity, and to deprive conscientious objectors of their exemption certificates by means of verbal humbug, it is about time that the Government took the matter in hand. Vaccination must be either compulsory or optional. The present state of things is a burlesque, and a scandal.

How, for instance, is it possible for an unlettered person to convince a magistrate like Mr. Mead, of the Thames Police Court? The other day a man applied for exemption, saying that he "objected to have filth put into his child." "That is no ground," said Mr. Mead. "I do not believe it is any use," replied the man. "That is no ground," said Mr. Mead. "I do not believe in it," the applicant persisted. "That is no ground," said Mr. Mead. "I give you another chance," this magisterial hair-splitter proceeded; "you conscientiously believe—what?" "That it is no good," replied the man. "I can't supply you with a certificate," said Mr. Mead. In the immortal phrase of C.-B., let's have no more of this foolery.

Mr. Mead again distinguished himself when, in self-complacent opposition to British tradition, he condemned the "foolish" custom of cautioning prisoners, upon arrest, that anything they say may be used in evidence against them. He ignores the fundamental principle which pronounces it even more important that the innocent should escape than that the guilty should suffer. His remark that "in some cases a person might confess to a murder which it would otherwise be most difficult to prove," resembles a precocious child's trite platitude intruded upon the philosophy of ages. Were not the practice of eliciting admissions from a prisoner strictly guarded and discouraged, we should be more than ever at the mercy of police evidence; and the police themselves would be exposed to a very improper and subtle temptation.

While on this subject, we observe that the veil of mystery surrounding the case in which a Hungerford man was fined for not having his child vaccinated is now lifted. It will be remembered that he applied for a certificate of exemption, which was granted. But he could not obtain it because the clerk had no forms with him, and the magistrates subsequently convicted him for not complying with the law. The magistrate's clerk is now dead, death being certified as "due to alcoholism." The absent-mindedness of the clerk about the forms, his extraordinary statement that applicants for exemption must give twenty-four hours' notice to the magistrates, and his whole conduct throughout the case are explained. The applicant, however, still remains mulct in an illegal fine, inflicted through the neglect of this alcoholic official. The fine must be remitted, and the certificate must be granted.

Without going at length into the case of the genial champion of the seamen, Mr. Havelock Wilson, M.P., whom the Shipping Federation is threatening to make a bankrupt, it is obvious that the defence put forward by the Chairman of the Clyde District Committee gives the show away. Mr. Raeburn admits Mr. Wilson's main contentions and harps on minor points; and amid other confusions of thought and expression such as are usually exhibited by a bad witness, he remarks that he can say "of his own knowledge" that certain Glasgow shipowners, against whom Mr. Wilson's union have cases pending in the High Court, "do not even know what Mr. Scott has been doing." How can he say this "of his own knowledge" unless he has conversed with them on the subject—and in that contingency they must know something of the matter! Before this note appears, however, we hope that the strong view of Sir Walter Runciman, who speaks of "a low-down game" being played upon Mr. Wilson, will have taken effect and that Mr. Wilson's troubles will be ended.

Mr. Miller, of the "Christian Science Churches," sends a long reply to our recent comments upon the inherent nonsense of the movement. He thinks he disposes of our criticism by the self-evident proposition, "What cannot an 'all-powerful' God do?" Well, of course, an all-powerful Deity can do anything and everything—and upon the assumption that He is equally all-good and beneficent, it follows not only that He *could*, but equally that He *would* prevent human suffering—*at any rate where it was not the result of any personal sin.* (We leave on one side the deeper question of punishment of creatures so badly made in God's image that they soon fall to pieces.) The other day we saw a little child knocked down by a horse and taken, in terrible agony, to a hospital, where it received every loving attention. The child and the horse were made by God—the hospital was built by man. The accident? *That* was caused by the carelessness of the silly child—miserable little sinner! But she was so pretty; and when we took her a few flowers and picture-books, and looked into her big brown eyes, *we* saw no trace of sin. She was in great pain, but she uttered no complaint. And to-day we have a little black-bordered card, with her name and age upon it, and above is the sign of a silver cross, and beneath it all are the words, "Suffer little children to come unto Me." Let no man rob the parents of that child of the comfort of those words. But he who would say that such things are part of a Divine scheme of things is a savage and a brute. Did we speak of the parents? Well, there is only one—and that is a sadder story still. The father was killed at his work—and the mother? *She is now in a lunatic asylum.* We will not ask Mr. Miller, with his Christian Science, to bring her back her reason. It were better not. She might blaspheme. When we saw her she was singing hymns.

We regret that it has again been impossible for us to keep pace with the demand for our journal. Despite the fact that W. H. Smith and Sons, Wymans, and the other wholesale agents sent us largely increased orders, and that we also made provision for a big reserve, we were out of print by Friday morning. We are now, however, laying down extra machinery, and hope soon to be able to publish on Tuesdays.

John Bull's Christmas-Box Scheme—*See Page 2 of Cover.*

"JOHN BULL" IN THE CITY.

THE LONDON AND PARIS EXCHANGE.

ITS METHOD OF BUSINESS EXPLAINED—AND ILLUSTRATED.

We have no desire to attack the London and Paris Exchange. We believe it to be a respectably-conducted institution—as such institutions go—and, in a sense, a necessary one. So long as people *will* bet, there must be bookmakers, and whether Mr. A. Moreton Mandeville calls himself a "banker," or a "share-dealer," or anything else, he is—like the "turf accountant" and the "turf commissioner"—a bookmaker. Some gamblers prefer backing horses, others prefer backing stocks and shares. In the former case there is the certainty that *one* horse in every race *must* win—in the latter, all the runners may be losers. This is one great advantage in favour of the financial bookmaker. Another is, that by the exercise of very little ingenuity in the wording of his contracts he can enforce payment by his clients.

Recognising these fundamental truths, and taking advantage of the more or less obsolete methods of the London Stock Exchange, Mr. Mandeville, with great ingenuity and enterprise, founded the London and Paris Exchange. For a time all went merrily, and large profits were raked in. Then came a bit of a "boom," with the result that, willy-nilly, many of the clients found themselves winners. The result was a temporary closing of the offices—followed by a speedy re-opening. And it was no small tribute to the confidence of the public in Mr. Mandeville and his institution that they survived the shock, and that the business has apparently regained its old proportions. Of course, everything has been favourable to it. Markets have been bad, and, consequently, "punters" have been losing.

"Special Lines."

There is, however, another aspect of the business of the London and Paris Exchange; and it is to that aspect more especially that we desire now to refer. Not only does the Exchange act as bookmaker towards its clients, but apparently it has lately been developing a very active department in the placing of shares, in both industrial and mining concerns, on behalf of "the shop," as the phrase goes. It is notorious that some of Sir Christopher Furniss' companies seem to have availed themselves extensively of its services, and we showed last week that a large block of Waring and Gillow's shares had also been recently "placed" in the same way. What Mr. Mandeville does is to secure "a line" of a certain stock, by either purchase or option, and then proceed to boom it in his circular and *Daily Report*. It is usually a stock for which there is not a very free market, but for which a nominal quotation exists. Then, upon either the "cover" or the "marginal" system, parcels of these shares are palmed off upon the public—sandwiched in, as a rule, between one or two well-known and popular securities. How this works, in the case of both industrial and mining shares, we shall show in a moment. But, in passing, we must point out what a door to fraud such a method of dealing opens. No matter how many shares Mr. Mandeville may sell, the transactions do not in any way affect the market price, as would be the case if the sales took place upon the Stock Exchange. But, on the other hand, if an unscrupulous firm of outside brokers, having placed large blocks of shares at the nominal market price, upon the "cover" system, wished to make sure of securing the whole of such "cover," it would simply have to send a selling order into the House for a small quantity of the shares, and the quotation would at once drop—and, hey, presto! the "cover" is gone. Let it be clearly understood that we do not suggest that the London and Paris Exchange would be guilty of such conduct; but others might be. At any rate, it is a grave risk which the investor runs, and it indicates the rottenness of the system. Then there is the wide margin between the buying and the selling price, and a score of other things, to be considered.

Principal or Agent?

Of course, the Exchange acts, or thinks it does, in all cases, as principal. But its literature and the terms of its contracts are woefully vague and ambiguous on the point. Although it says, "We have this day sold to you," or "We have this day bought from you," it informs its clients, on the same contract, that "all balances arising out of transactions entered into *for them*" shall be paid at certain dates; whilst it also accepts yearly subscriptions entitling the client to a copy of its *Daily Report* and to certain *advice coupons*. And we have no hesitation in saying that, as a matter of law, Mr. Mandeville is liable to refund every penny he receives in response to these coupons, in respect of stocks in which he is interested and out of which he makes an undisclosed profit. No inquirer would notice the technical meaning of the phrase "We have sold to you," as distinguished from "We have bought for you"; and once a fee, however small and however indirect is accepted for advice, the relationship of principal and agent arises.

So much by way of introduction. Let us now take, from the scores in our possession, a concrete illustration of how the whole thing works.

A Typical Case.

A few days ago we received this letter—typical of most of those which have reached us—in regard to the Exchange:—

27, S—— Road,
West Kensington Park, London, W.
25th September, 1906.

Dear Sir,—Being an annual subscriber to your most valuable paper, John Bull (which I sincerely regret did not appear six months before), I beg leave to crave your indulgence and assistance in a matter of the gravest importance to me.

I invested in all £1,057 in about 12 weeks, commencing about the middle of March, 1906, with the London and Paris Exchange, Limited, this sum representing the whole of my savings of a lifetime and my only means of subsistence for the future. I am now 59 years of age, and I shall in a few months be compelled to relinquish my present employment under the age clause.

My intention was to invest in sound industrials on marginal investments, but, recommended and persuaded by the L.P.E., eventually the list was as follows:—

400	Lyon's	£465 0 0
200	Cements	96 0 0
3000	Myall Peak Hills ...	238 15 0
3000	East Fingalls	187 10 0
100	Dolcoath	25 0 0
50	Canadian Pacifics ...	50 0 0

Lyons and Canadians were my own choice, Dolcoath and Cements were soundly urged by their manager at the Strand Branch, but Myall Peak Hills and East Fingalls were bought on advice through their paper, the *Daily Report*, which boomed them beyond measure, and in every number of their paper, "buy these mining shares" was the predominant feature. Their manager told me afterwards they had bought 10,000 of the shares cheap.

I paid £1 7s. 6d. annual subscription for their paper, with 12 special advice coupons. Finding that these shares did not by any means follow their predictions, I asked them if they thought it prudent I should increase my holding in Myalls and East Fingalls. Their answer was to the effect that I "could stake my life on them." I also enquired by means of advice coupons, and this was their reply:—

"London, 1st June, 1906.

W. E. C., Esq.,
27, S—— Road,
West Kensington Park, W.

Dear Sir,—We are duly in receipt of your two advice coupons of yesterday's date, for which we thank you, and in reply beg to say that we still consider East Fingalls and Myall and Peak Hill excellent purchases among low-priced descriptions.

With regard to the former, the latest cable to hand states that value as much as 8 ozs. of about 10 ft. in certain direction has been developed, and there is every prospect that the lode will widen out and prove extensive. Good buying has certainly taken place on Colonial account, and we certainly consider the present time opportune for averaging. To-day's quotation is round about 6s. 3d.

The latest cable from the mine manager of the Myall and Peak Hill property states that during the month of May £3,400 (sic) were crushed and 500 ozs. of gold recovered, which is equivalent to a profit for the four weeks of £250, the cost per ton being only 4s. 11½d. The new plant will be started in a few days, and we have every reason to expect that with a continuance of favourable information from the property, and with good buying both on Home and Colonial accounts a substantial appreciation will be seen during the next few months. Present price 7s. 9d.

Awaiting the favour of your esteemed instructions,

Yours faithfully,

London and Paris Exchange, Limited,

For A. M. Mandeville, J. J. F.,

Managing Director."

Otherwise I should have got rid of them, but they dropped in value so soon after that I was distracted, and they then advised me that it was best to sell 1,000 each of the Myalls and East Fingalls, which was done. Their next move was that they had bought from me 200 Lyons, 100 Cements, 50 Dolcoaths, 1,000 Myalls, and 1,000 East Fingalls, according to their rules and regulations. All this is apparently a dead loss, my hard-earned £1,057 having dwindled to about £420, and even this latter is represented by the remainder of the apparently worthless shares still in their hands. I should mention that the Canadians were sold at a profit of about £30 to help in paying off the liability incurred on the other shares, but this sum, of course, is in the hands of the L.P.E.

I hope I have fully explained the terrible position in which I am now placed, and I trust that you will afford me the benefit of your advice in retrieving by legal or other means the money that has fallen into the hands of these people.

Yours faithfully,

W. E. C.

Now, what advice can we give this unfortunate man? We confess we have little sympathy with him. He is fifty-nine years of age, and at that time of life he should surely have learnt wisdom. We are doubtful about his having any remedy. The bulk of the transactions appear to have been completed before he availed himself of his "advice coupons." Still, there are certain inducements held out in the *Daily Report*, to which he was an accepted subscriber, certain promises of advice and guidance, which *might* be construed as imposing a duty on the Exchange to do its best, and act with full disclosure towards its subscribers. But litigation is a risky and a costly thing. We are afraid his money has gone. Just look at the prices at which he bought the principal lines, and compare them with to-day's quotations:—

	Sale price.		Present price.
East Fingalls	6s. 3d.	...	4s. 6d.
Myalls	7s. 9d.	...	4s. 6d.

And these were described, in June, by Mr. Mandeville as "excellent purchases"—and this in response to a special "advice coupon!"

A Subtle Condition.

But our correspondent's trouble may not end with the loss of all this money. Unless he at once closes the outstanding "bargains," he may land himself in further possible liability (although we should strongly advise him to resist it), for here is a delicious extract from the conditions printed on the back of the contracts: "*The client's loss on this contract is not limited to the deposit mentioned unless otherwise specially stated in writing.*"

What candour! Note the wording. Not the client's "liability," but the client's "loss"!

Our correspondent thinks he still has "about £420" in hand, but, as a matter of fact, he already has a *debit* balance against him of over £400!

Mr. Mandeville is, at any rate, a prophet, sometimes.

The British Ring Syndicate.

With reference to our remarks on the British Ring Syndicate, in which we mentioned that Mr. H. Neville Carrett, of the War Office, was given as one of the patrons of the concern, Mr. Carrett writes to us as follows from the War Office, under date September 22nd, 1906;—

"I beg to inform you that I know nothing of the "firm mentioned, have never seen one of their rings, "and have never worn a ring of any description in all "my life. Neither have I ever written any testimonial."

We congratulate Mr. Carrett upon his simplicity and prudence in the matter of rings and testimonials. For the rest, his disclaimer is what we expected from a member of the War Office staff.

City Amalgamations.

There is quite an air of amalgamation surrounding the oil market just now. The Shell's absorption by the Royal Dutch Company—for that is what the proposals come to—has hardly awakened enthusiasm. Shell shareholders are concerned as to future management, and wonder at the stipulation that their dividend for 1906 shall not exceed 5 per cent., before they have received any news of a distribution for 1905. In the Baku field a big combination is to be arranged, which will carry with it reorganised management. In any deal in that unsettled region, the Schiebaieff, the most Russian of the British group, should come out well. The £5 Six per Cent. Preferences, with 21s. dividend arrears, are not dear at 2¾, compared with the £1 Ordinary shares at 8s. 6d.

MARKET KEYNOTES.

Argentine Railway Reserves.

Argentine railway and land companies' reports continue to give substantial evidence of River Plate prosperity. We do not hear very encouraging reports regarding harvest prospects, but the railway dividends are in any event assured, as the companies have during the last few years accumulated enormous reserves. Those of the *B.A. Great Southern* now total to the last carry forward £876,732, the *B.A. Rosario's* £1,080,705, the *B.A. Western's* £1,073,550, and the *B.A. Pacific's* £736,570. With these amounts to fall back upon, there should be no need to trouble about any trifling temporary factors. On any little set-back the ordinary stocks and shares to yield 5 to 5½ per cent. are well worth buying. *North-Eastern Preferences* are an Argentine stock for a quick turn. Another Foreign Railway issue which is being picked up by shrewd operators is the *Manila Company's* 6 per cent. debenture. Speyers hold a controlling interest in these bonds—and Speyers are rearranging the company's finances.

Indian mines are looking up. The *Mysore* is showing remarkable developments at depth, and the *Orregum* reports a useful strike. The *Champion Reef* is, we fear, played out.

There is no need for concern regarding *Waihis*. The reaction is due merely to a desire to eliminate a weak speculative account. The mine is as good as ever—probably the world's best gold producer.

NEW ISSUE.

The Nantes Butter and Refrigerating Co., Ltd., is formed with a capital of £100,000, in £1 shares, 87,500 now being offered, to deal in French butter. It takes over a factory at Nantes, and refrigerating machinery, and the butter will be collected from the "farmers and market places" in the neighbourhood for shipment to England. There is an estimate of profits of the usual sort. If a certain price is got, and working expenses do not exceed a particular amount, well, then, there will be good dividends. The company is to pay £39,500 for the factory, etc., £27,000 being in cash. There are various other payments—50,000 shares being put aside for working capital. We notice that the chairman of the company is Sir Robert Hastings Harris, K.C.B., the gallant Admiral who did such good service afloat in the South African war. But what can *he* know of butter making.

The British Guiana Rubber Corporation invites subscriptions for 40,000 £1 shares of a capital of £60,000. The company acquires certain leases of land from the Government of British Guiana. This land has some rubber trees upon it, and is said to be suitable for rubber cultivation. There is an estimate of net profit of £33,000 from 30,000 trees, which seems a very generous estimate, to say the least of it. The vendors want £50,000 for what they have to sell, and that, too, is a very generous estimate of value. These shares should be left to the vendors and their friends.

INQUIRIES.

Foreign Bonds.—Brand (Pontardulais).—Have nothing to do with them.

Pen. Wyoming Copper Shares.—G. W. C. (Sunderland).—We think very little of them.

Mining Shares.—J. M. (Herne Bay).—They are of no value.

Copper Shares.—Simplex (King's Cross).—We should sell upon any rise.

Two Shares.—Cyclops (Gateshead).—We should sell them for what you can get.

Outside Brokers.—W. T. W. (Bromley).—These people are persons to be avoided.

Investment of £200.—J. P. (Bristol).—We do not advise you to invest the money in the way you suggest. Buy sound industrial shares, which you can get to give you a return of from 5 to 6 per cent.

District Railway Ordinary.—J. M. (South Hampstead).—We think it fair purchase at the present quotation, notwithstanding the fact that the Company have been losing money heavily. We are inclined to think that they will get over their difficulties by-and-bye, although they are at present very formidable.

Conversion of Business.—G. L. (Dover).—(1) The cost would depend in considerable measure upon the amount of the capital. You should consult a solicitor. (2) You might try the General Accident, of 9 and 10, King Street, E.C.

Immediate Life Annuity.—Advice (Derby).—We shall be happy to give you the information asked for upon your sending us your name and address.

Five or Seven per Cent.—X.Y.Z. (Bolton).—(1) The shares of Paquin, Ltd., at their present price, and on the basis of the last dividend, would give you close upon 7 per cent., and Slater's, on the same basis, would give you a trifle over 7 per cent. (2) We should have nothing to do with the Mining Company you name.

Safe Investment.—V. J. S. (Southport).—We cannot undertake to advise you to put your money on deposit with people who offer you the high interest you name. You should remember the Iron Duke's saying, that high interest means bad security. At the same time we have no reason to suppose that the persons who offer this interest are not financially sound. They have been doing business for many years, and, so far as we know, have never been in default.

Hungarian Money Lottery.—L. L. B. (Hythe).—We cannot advise you to send money to Messrs. Penzes, of Budapesth, and we should have thought that the circular you send us would in itself prevent anyone who read it from buying tickets. It tells you that by means of this lottery "you can acquire great wealth without trouble," that "no other money lottery in the world offers so many winning chances," and, again, "everybody must draw a big prize in this lottery." All these statements are untrue.

The Mint Co-operative Club, Ltd. (Maidstone).—We are obliged to you for the papers, which we return under cover. We have referred to the matter in another column.

New York Life Insurance Company.—Medicus (Kells).—We should accept the offer, and resume the payments, advice which must not be taken to mean that we think others who are not already insured in the Company would do well to insure with it. All we mean is that the New York Life Insurance Company is solvent, and that, in our opinion, there is not sufficient reason for you to lose the premiums you have already paid. We are glad to know that our Irish friends appreciate John Bull.

Homesteads.—Investor (Leytonstone).—There is no question about the stability of this company or their carrying out any engagement they enter into. The point for you to consider is whether their terms suit you, and, if so, you need not hesitate to deal.

Brokers.—Kay (Forest Hill).—We cannot undertake to recommend a firm.

General Hydraulic.—J.P. (Levallion).—We see no particular attraction in these for investment. The electric light is a serious competitor, and there is little scope for development in the hydraulic company's business. (2) General Canadian Electric.—Hold for present.

Cleopatra Copper.—Constant Reader (Elgin Avenue).—We cannot advise. Mining is at the best a speculation, but when the value of the product is fluctuating, the directorate is American, and the company is registered on the other side, the risks are enormously increased.

Nigel Deep.—Uncanny Scot (Dundee).—There is no prospect whatever for these in the "near future." We doubt if there ever will be, although they would no doubt go better with Kaffirs generally.

Motor Traction.—T. F. M. (Clapham).—The shares are of no value. Do not follow the undertaking through any more quick-change performances.

Iron and Steel Shares.—H. B.—Richardsons Westgarth dividend is due this month; South Durham in November.

Murchison Proprietary.—We do not advise you to join reconstruction.

Lottery Bonds.—Curieux.—You omitted to send your name and address.

The Shilling House Club.—J. S. (Liverpool).—The card is of no value. We return it as desired.

Foreign Bonds.—R. W. (Westcliffe-on-Sea).—We have looked over the book. We advise you to have nothing to do with the bonds.

Mutual Life Insurance Company of N.Y.—G. E. A. (Harrow).—It is impossible to say whether this company "will in the future be a sound concern." All we can say is that now, despite gross mismanagement, it is financially strong; but if you want to insure, we advise you to do so with a English office.

Outside Brokers.—W. H. (Edinburgh).—We have inquired into your complaint, but do not find it well founded. Messrs. Halford and Co. have been doing business as outside brokers in London since 1869. They are not, therefore, mere birds of passage—here to-day and gone to-morrow. For this reason, and because Messrs. Halford and Co. are of good repute, we acquainted them with the substance of your letter, that they might answer it if they could and cared to do so. They replied by putting the whole correspondence before us, including your original letters. These satisfy us that you are in error in saying that you bought the railway stock to take up. You gambled in differences, and lost. We say many hard things of outside brokers, but it would be not less absurd than unjust to deny that some of them are honest and honourable in their dealings with their clients. We are satisfied that Messrs. Halford and Co. are within this category.

John B. Mackenzie.—E. J. (River View).—"In all seriousness," to quote Mr. Mackenzie, we advise you to have nothing to do with his "special offer." If you do what he asks you to do, namely send £350 in order that he may speculate on your account in American securities, you will be very lucky if you get any of it back.

Ottoman Bonds.—Ottoman (London).—We do not consider these bonds worth purchasing. So far as we know the drawings are fair enough.

Provident Life Association.—H. J. S. (Brighton).—There is no surrender value paid by the Association until you have been a member five years.

Victoria Assurance Company.—A. L. (Devonport).—We think it ought to do well.

Century Insurance Office.—W. M. (Liverpool).—It is a small office with headquarters in Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, established in 1885. It does business in life, fire, sickness, accident, employers' liability, vehicle, fidelity guarantee, and burglary. Its total funds only amount to £296,693.

Victorian Deep Leeds.—Anselmo (Twyford).—(1) The shares are highly speculative, but the London shares at their present quotation look promising. (2) Mr. J. H. Curie has written an excellent and authoritative book on the Gold Mines of the World, and is a recognised authority on the subject.

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THE POSITION OF THE POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK.

III.—DISTURBING FACTS.

By Jesse Quail.

[Mr. Quail continues his searching examination of the finances of the Post Office Savings Bank, commenced in our issue for September 22nd.]

The State was bound to lose by the transactions referred to in our last issue, and the total depreciation in the securities held, marked by the difference between the prices of 1898 and at the present time, amounts in round figures to over twenty millions sterling. It was pointed out years ago, by more than one writer on the subject, that if the funds of the Savings Bank were invested in a security subject to fluctuations, periodical losses were bound to occur. But the warning was not heeded. The Joint Stock Banks, which invest their reserve in Government securities, provide against similar losses by writing down their investments in Consols; and in most of their balance-sheets the valuation stands at £85—the lowest price reached during fifty years. The Government simply publish a statement of their holdings at par, though the actual value to-day is some 14 per cent. lower, and large blocks were acquired at more than 10 per cent. over par. In reporting the Savings Bank assets in this misleading fashion the Government have adopted a suggestion made by Sir E. W. Hamilton to the Select Committee of 1902. He proposed that a simple statement should be substituted for a balance-sheet, "leaving to anybody to make any valuation he liked." The remark smacks of official contempt for the opinion of "outsiders," i.e., the public.

Now, the price of Consols, though it may rise much above the present level, is never again likely to reach the abnormally high figures to which quotations mounted prior to the Boer War. This for three reasons:

(1) The interest has since been reduced from 2¾ to 2½, so that the intrinsic value of the security as an investment is less than it was.

(2) There is a very much larger amount of Government stocks in the market to-day. £92,000,000 of new Consols have been created, besides £67,000,000 added to the National Debt in other ways, to defray the costs of the War. There has also been a widening of the limits of Trustee stocks, which now include most Colonial loans.

(3) The great increase in the indebtedness of Municipal Corporations has provided the investor with some £250,000,000 of loans at a higher rate of interest than Consols, and yet regarded by many as almost equally safe. The Colonies have also been large borrowers at higher rates of interest than Consols. This abundance of competitive stocks of the "gilt edged" class helps to keep down the price of Consols and will continue to do so. Hence this once peerless security now lingers listlessly below £90. It is therefore clear that sooner or later a deficiency on the Post Office Savings Bank, of larger or smaller aggregate than at present, will have to be made good out of the Consolidated Fund, or "the growing produce thereof"; in other words, from the taxpayers' pockets.

The main question is, How shall this be done? Mr. Alfred Marks, a financial authority who has written a rather alarmist pamphlet on the position of the Post Office Savings Bank, which originally appeared in the form of articles in the *Investors' Review*, suggested making up the deficit by an issue of new stock. If this plan were adopted the stock ought to be one not dealt in on the Stock Exchange, and so not subject to fluctuations in value. Mr. Edwin Cannan, another authority, urged that the Consols purchased ought to have been cancelled as debt redeemed, and the liability should simply stand in the accounts as sums due to depositors. This would make it a mere matter of book-keeping, but would not get rid of the actual loss on the Consols bought at over par.

Turning to the other deficiency, that on the working annually made good out of taxes, it is no more justifiable than the annual loss on the Post Office Telegraphs, but, like it, due to the uneconomical and unbusinesslike management which pervades so many State departments. We can imagine how such a growing deficit would have vexed the soul of the illustrious statesman who instituted the Post Office Savings Bank, and whose intention was that it should be so managed as to pay its way. It is maintained by Mr. Marks and other writers that the interest at 2½ per cent. paid to depositors in the Savings Bank is too high, and the alleged excessive rate is the cause of the annual loss. The Select Committee of 1902 recommended a reduction of one-eighth per cent. in the interest, but the late Government, in framing their Bill, thought it inexpedient to adopt the recommendation. Mr. Marks says: "The rate of interest allowed by the Post Office Savings Bank (and the Trustee Savings Bank also) must be reduced, not by one-eighth per cent., but by much more." And he suggests that 1 per cent., or at most 1¼, half the present interest, should be the rate. He refers to certain statements made before the Select Committee to the effect that the rate of interest is a matter of secondary importance with depositors, who only look to the security of their savings. All this, however, is put forward in the interests of the joint stock banks, which not only object to the rate of interest, but strongly opposed Sir William Harcourt's extension of the limits of deposits. But there is not the least occasion for any reduction in the present rate of interest, and the late Government evidently recognised that to make it would be an unpopular move. Two and a half is not a high rate of interest, but a low one. Only in times of extreme and exceptional inflation of the prices of securities, such as occurred in 1896-7, could 2½ be deemed high. Other countries which have State savings banks pay much higher rates, 3, 3½, and even 4 per cent. being allowed to depositors by some of the Continental savings banks.

It is true that the reduction of the rate of interest on Consols from the "sweet simplicity of the three per cents.," firstly to 2¾ and then to 2½, destroyed much of the margin between the interest allowed to its depositors by the Post Office Savings Bank and that received by it from its investments in Consols, which at one time yielded large profits to the Savings Banks. But in this connection there are facts to be taken into account which those who clamour for the lowering of the Savings Bank interest appear to overlook. In the first place, it was by the aid of the funds of the Post Office Savings Bank that the reduction of interest on Consols became possible. Even Sir E. W. Hamilton has acknowledged this, and Mr. Marks admits that the Savings Bank's deposits "have been used to lower artificially the rate of interest on the Public Debt." One of Mr. Gladstone's objects in instituting Post Office Savings Banks was to make them "auxiliaries to the Treasury." He tells us that, besides the better provision for the savings of the people, "I had an object of first-rate importance *which has been attained*, to provide the Minister of Finance with a strong financial arm, and to secure his independence of the City by giving him a large and certain command of money." (Morley's "Life," Vol. II., p. 52.) He also remarked:—

> "It was only by the establishment of the Post Office Savings Banks and their great progressive development that the Finance Minister has been provided with an instrument sufficiently powerful to make him independent of the Bank and the City powers when he has occasion for sums in seven figures."

(To be continued.)

AMONG THE BOOKS.

By Frank Harris.

[Mr. Frank Harris, *our brilliant literary and dramatic critic, reviews Mr. H. G. Wells' latest book.*]

"IN THE DAYS OF THE COMET."*

In writing of Joan of Arc in these columns a few weeks ago, I remarked that all the great fathers of divinity from St. Augustine to Newman had been distinguished by a certain scepticism, a persistent questioning of sense and outward things, whereas the great artist was compelled by the nature of his craft to be an implicit believer, forced to have faith in his creations; a belief untainted by any shadow of doubt. The moment you speak or think of your imaginary men and women as puppets, as Thackeray again and again did, you destroy the illusion to your reader, and he loses some of his interest in your characters.

The Conditions of Utopia.

There is a corollary to this proposition: the more improbable you make your situations or the incidents of your story the more imperative is it that your creations should be recognisable men and women. In his latest Utopia Mr. Wells seems to have felt all this obscurely. He makes his hero a clerk in some manufacturing works in the Midlands: a clerk who is like most intelligent clerks, a free-thinker, a republican and socialist; but his clerk is infinitely too clever to be convincing: he is of first-rate ability, indeed a man of genius. But it isn't easy to make a man of genius credible: you want to know something about his father and mother: how he has come to grow to that height with such rapidity and out of such surroundings, and Mr. Wells simply flings his genius down before you and requires you to take him for granted, and this gives an air of unreality to the story in the very first chapter. Here is how the clerk talks of his friend Parload, who lives in one wretched little garret which is described with the minuteness of a Balzac from the cracked and bulging ceiling with its "yellow and olive-green stains" to the "uneven floor-boards" and the "rat-tailed shaving brush":—

"Parload is a famous man now, a great figure in a great time, his work upon intersecting radiations has broadened the intellectual horizon of mankind for ever, and I, who am at best a hewer of intellectual wood, a drawer of living water, can smile, and he can smile, to think how I patronised and posed and jabbered over him in the darkness of those early days."

Now, that is not the way a clerk writes: even poverty does not confer that distinction on him. In spite of the minuteness with which Mr. Wells describes the surroundings of his hero-clerk, the extraordinary intelligence of the youth, and of his friend, Parload, make heavy drafts upon our credulity, and the comet, when it comes, makes larger drafts still.

Utopia Needs no Prologue.

And this is not the worst of it: Mr. Wells starts his Utopia with a wretched little prologue in which he tells us about "a grey-haired man" writing in a tower whose "simple costume" "suggested neither period nor country": and he goes on "it might, I thought, be the Happy Future, or Utopia, or the Land of Simple Dreams." In other words, Mr. Wells, even before the beginning, will not allow us to take his Utopia seriously. Then why be at the trouble of constructing the fiction? If you create the fiction, Mr. Wells, you do it in order that it may be credible. Why then take away our belief in it before you begin? If I point out all those mistakes and insist upon them as noyful and heinous, it is because Mr. Wells has come very near writing a masterpiece and I resent the little mistakes and foibles which hurt and diminish what would otherwise have been a magnificent performance.

Mr. Wells as a Writer.

Mr. Wells is certainly among the first half-dozen writers of English now living: as an intelligence he stands with Bernard Shaw on the forehead of the age to come: brave soldiers both in the liberation-war of humanity, immeasurably more important than the Kiplings and the Barries. One is justified, then, in expecting considerable things from him and in insisting that he should give us of his best. The moot-point about him is whether he has sufficient temperament to create characters that will live, characters that cast a shadow as they move across the page. His early so-called scientific romances were extraordinarily stimulating; they made one think; I doubt whether he has ever done better; I sometimes think that this is his proper and peculiar field—a field wherein he is unrivalled, unapproached; his first serious novel, "Love and Mr. Lewisham," was good, perhaps; but others could have written it, and if "Kipps" takes a far lower place, still whatever Mr. Wells writes is not only well written, but written by a man who, as Heine said of himself, is on the topmost wave of all the culture of his time.

One opens every new book of Mr. Wells with a little delightful shiver of anticipation: this may be the long expected masterpiece, the classic which he ought to write, which we are justified in expecting from him.

I speak openly of his position, his genius and the hopes which centre about him simply because I know that in these days of journalistic cheap-jacks with their leather lungs and silly tin gods it is almost impossible for genius to get a fair hearing and that respectful attention which it deserves. I wish to create a sort of hush of anticipation for Mr. Wells's work; to put it on its lowest level, that is the way to get the best out of him.

His Third Utopia.

In the last three or four years Mr. Wells has written three Utopias, "Mankind in the Making," "A Modern Utopia," and "In the Days of the Comet." His "Mankind in the Making" was a great deal better than "Anticipations" and "A Modern Utopia" was much more readable than "Mankind in the Making" and "In the Days of the Comet" is considerably better than "A Modern Utopia." It is indeed a remarkable book, almost the masterpiece one would expect: almost; but not altogether: his prologues and epilogues and the other scaffolding should have been taken away when the building was finished; they were probably helps to Mr. Wells, but they are hindrances to us, and he should away with them. But after all these are not serious faults. L'Abbé Prévot wrote four stupid volumes, and in them embedded a little tale of 150 pages which was a deathless masterpiece: we read "Manon Lescaut" and not one in a thousand readers knows or cares anything about the other three volumes of fluff; but Prévot's masterpiece in itself was rounded and complete and perfect: whereas this book "In the Days of the Comet" is irritatingly imperfect; good as it is.

What is the Hero's Name?

The first part of the book, the ordinary life of the little clerk with his poor loving servant of a mother and his friend, Parload, and the curate, Gabbitas, and his girl Nettie, and her lover, Verrall, should all have been realised much more intensely. They are excellently sketched, all of them original human figures, not copies; but too slight, too vague, like shadows that waver across a screen. One example: here I am now, searching the book for the clerk's name; it is, I know, Leadford, or something of that sort; but I cannot find it; it is only mentioned once, I think, or perhaps twice in the book, and it is not at all suitable. Think what a name Balzac would have given him, a name like a burr which would stick in the memory for ever, indetachable: some Z. Marcas, or Birotteau, or Finot, with a mass of associations clinging to the very sound and sight of it. Mr. Wells does not get good names; he has no part of Dickens' supreme faculty in this respect, no Chadband, no Pecksniff, is to be found in his pages.

But just because his faculty in this direction is small he should have forced himself to do his best, he should not simply shirk the difficulty altogether and leave the man to wander unchristened through time.

The Book Itself.

The book itself falls naturally into two parts: the first part of 174 pages is occupied with a criticism of things as they are; the second part, from page 174 to 300 with things as they should be, as Mr. Wells thinks they might be. Mr. Wells's criticism of the existing social state is, after all deductions have been made, the best which has ever been put in print. He sees all the faults of this latter day civilisation, and sees them with extraordinary clearness, and etches them one by one into the picture with the artistry of genius. Here is a sketch of a modern manufacturing town which needs no praise:—

"It came to me then, I am sure, for the first time, how promiscuous, how higgledy-piggledy was the whole of that jumble of mines and homes, collieries and potbanks, railway-yards, canals, schools, forges and blast-furnaces, churches, chapels, allotment-hovels, a vast irregular agglomeration of ugly smoking accidents in which men lived as happy as frogs in a dustbin. Each thing jostled and damaged the other things about it, each thing ignored the other

* "In the Days of the Comet." By H. G. Wells (Macmillan).

John Bull's Christmas-Box Scheme—See Page 2 of Cover.

things about it; the smoke of the furnace defiled the pot-bank clay, the clatter of the railway deafened the worshippers in church, the public-house thrust corruption at the school doors, the dismal homes squeezed miserably amidst the monstrosities of industrialism, with an effect of groping imbecility. Humanity choked amidst its products, and all its energy went in increasing its disorder, like a blind stricken thing that suffers and struggles and sinks in a morass."

The Stupidity of Modern War.

Here again is what he has to say of war and its monstrous irrationality :—

"The old war of savage and barbaric nations did at least change humanity; you assumed yourselves to be a superior tribe in physique and discipline, you demonstrated this upon your neighbours, and if successful, you took their land and their women and perpetuated and enlarged your superiority. The new war changed nothing but the colour of maps, the design of postage stamps, and the relationship of a few accidentally conspicuous individuals. In one of the last of these international epileptic fits, for example, the English, with much dysentery and bad poetry, and a few hundred deaths in battle, conquered the South African Boers at a gross cost of about three thousand pounds per head—they could have bought the whole of that preposterous imitation of a nation for a tenth of that sum—and except for a few substitutions of personalities, this group of partially corrupt officials in the place of that, and so forth, the permanent change was altogether insignificant."

He sees everything with the same clearness of vision: he pictures a modern newspaper office as it is, then he gives the salient peculiarity of English papers to-day in one line: "To read them is to realise the extraordinary carelessness of truth that dishonoured the press of those latter days."

The Private Ownership of Land.

At length Mr. Wells comes to the root of the matter and sums up the whole state of society by declaring with perfect insight that neither the stupid monstrosity of war, nor the deaths by preventable disease, nor any other of the plagues that decimate humanity is so vile and so far-reaching in evil consequences as the private ownership of land. Here is his summing-up :—

"There were in England and America, and indeed throughout the world, two great informal divisions of human beings—the Secure and the Insecure. . . . . Through the private ownership of land that had resulted from the neglect of feudal obligations in Britain and the utter want of political foresight in America, large masses of property had become artificially stable in the hands of a small minority, to whom it was necessary to mortgage all new public and private enterprises, and who were held together not by any tradition of service and nobility but by the natural sympathy of common interests and a common large scale of living. It was a class without any very definite boundaries; vigorous individualities, by methods for the most part violent and questionable, were constantly thrusting themselves from insecurity to security, and the sons and daughters of secure people, by marrying insecurity or flagrant vice, would sink into the life of anxiety and insufficiency which was the ordinary life of man. The rest of the population was landless and, except by working directly or indirectly for the Secure, had no legal right to exist. And such was the shallowness and insufficiency of our thought, such the stifled egotism of all our feelings before the Last Days, that very few indeed of the Secure could be found to doubt that this was the natural and only conceivable order of the world.

"It is the life of the Insecure under the old order that I am displaying, and I hope that I am conveying something of its hopeless bitterness to you, but you must not imagine that the Secure lived lives of paradisaical happiness. The pit of insecurity below them made itself felt, even though it was not comprehended. Life about them was ugly; the sight of ugly and mean houses, of ill-dressed people, the vulgar appeals of the dealers in popular commodities, were not to be escaped. There was below the threshold of their minds an uneasiness. . . . . You must read Thackeray to get the full flavour of their lives. . . . . Each generation bewails the decay of that "fidelity" of servants no generation ever saw. A world that is squalid in one corner is squalid altogether, but that they never understood. They believed there was not enough of anything to go round, they believed that this was the intention of God and an incurable condition of life, and they held passionately, and with a sense of right, to their disproportionate share."

The Jew Painted to the Life.

Although it is in the second part of the book, a certain portrait of the Jew and his influence upon modern times belongs really to the first part of the book, and so I shall give the extract here. I wonder if Lord Goschen or Lord Rothschild read it, would he see the likeness?

"Gurker, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was partially occulted, as far as I was concerned, by the back of Lord Adisham. Ever and again Gurker protruded into the discussion, swaying forward, a deep throaty voice, a big nose, a coarse mouth with a dropping everted lower lip, eyes peering amidst folds and wrinkles. He made his confession for his race. "We Jews," he said, "have gone through the system of this world, creating nothing, consolidating many things, destroying much. Our racial self-conceit has been monstrous. We seem to have used our ample coarse intellectuality for no other purpose than to develop and master and maintain the convention of property, to turn life into a sort of mercantile chess and spend our winnings grossly. . . We have had no sense of service to mankind. Beauty which is godhead—we made it a possession."

The New Time.

Then the comet comes, bringing with it a green vapour, some new gas, and all life is transformed :—

"Those cities of growth and accident are altogether gone, never a chimney smokes about our world to-day, and the sound of the weeping of children who toiled and hungered, the dull despair of overburthened women, the noise of brute quarrels in alleys, all shameful pleasures and all the ugly grossness of wealthy pride have gone with them, with the utter change in our lives. As I look back into the past I see a vast exultant dust of housebreaking and removal rise up into the clear air that followed the hours of the green vapours, I live again the Year of Tents, the Year of Scaffolding, and like the triumph of a new theme in a piece of music—the great cities of our new days arise. Come Caerlyon and Armedon, the twin cities of lower England, with the winding summer city of the Thames between, and I see the gaunt dirt of old Edinburgh die, to rise again white and tall beneath the shadow of her ancient hill; and Dublin, too, re-shaped, returning enriched, fair, spacious, the city of rich laughter and warm hearts, gleaming gaily in a shaft of sunlight through the soft warm rain. I see the great cities America has planned and made; the Golden City, with ever-ripening fruit along its broad, warm ways, and the bell-glad City of a Thousand Spires."

Free Love.

At the very end of the book Mr. Wells faces the sex problem and decides heroically that in the new time the virtue of a woman will not reside in her body; but in her heart and soul. The love of the old convention in this matter has debased and deformed the work of Tolstoi. Mr. Wells looks at the matter rationally, soberly, and it is amusing to see how one paper screams at him over it, and how another paper, *The Daily Mirror* of all papers in the world, declares with an exquisite infelicity of words that Free Love is both "gentleman-like and Christian."

I am not sure that "Free Love" will ever obtain even in Utopia; I am rather inclined to believe in the supremacy of one unique passion; but I am sure that in a higher social state a fault on the part of the woman would not be more heavily visited than is now a fault committed by a man; all the sins of the flesh would be on the same plane, to be regretted, indeed; but not to be punished.

Though I disagree in this respect with you, Mr. Wells, still I recognise that "In the Days of the Comet" is a memorable book; but I expect still better from you. You should give us "A New Eutopia," the land, not of Nowhere, but of Everywhere; the good land of possibility that is here, as Goethe said, underneath our feet, to be realised whenever we will, a veritable New Jerusalem where all good things shall be as universal-free as sunlight and air, where at length the lives of men and women and children shall come to be worthy of the magnificent framework of the skies and waters, and moor and woodland.

Mr. Wells's Protest.

Since writing the above I see that Mr. Wells in the *Daily Express* has protested hotly against the idea that he has advocated "free love" in his new book. I am bound, of course, to accept his disclaimer; but to have been misunderstood by the *Daily Express*, *The Times*, and Frank Harris is in itself an achievement. But whether Mr. Wells has spoken out or not matters little: the idea is in the air and will be canvassed. Marriage as a sacrament has been killed by the law of divorce, and marriage as a sentence for life has been questioned by Mr. Meredith. The beliefs of twenty centuries are passing away like a dream, and our faith in the inviolability of marriage is fading before our eyes. So I have allowed what I have written on the matter to stand: Mr. Wells will not accuse me of wilfully misrepresenting him: even now I count him with us in this as in all other really important matters.

"THE *FOLLY* OF SOCIALISM."

By Herbert Vivian.

Socialism, like regicide, is worse than a crime; it is a blunder. We are all, or nearly all, of us deeply moved by the sorrows and sufferings of the poor. We struggle and strive to alleviate them. We recognise the danger and cruelty of those enormous disparities of wealth, which always have been and ever will be. But that is no reason for seeking to apply an empirical nostrum, which could only leave the last state of mankind worse than the first.

Communist Clap-Traps.

I am sorry to find so brilliant and sane a writer as Mr. Frank Harris condescending to such paltry claptrap as a tirade against Miss Krupp's trousseau. Let him, please, remain upon his literary pedestal, and leave the arena of politics to the politicians. Or, if he must come down amongst us, let him take his opinions from the great statesmen and economists who have made of political philosophy almost an exact science. His strange bed-fellows of the various Labour parties can only bring adversity upon all with whom they come in contact, and I desire that he, as well as this realm, may be prosperous.

Redistribution of Property.

The rich we shall always have with us. If you took away all their riches to-day, rich men would rise again to-morrow. You cannot have an equal division of unequal earnings every day; nor can you prevent the accumulation of great fortunes without discouraging industry, dislocating trade, and indirectly injuring the workers whom you desire to relieve. Mr. Harris will retort that he pleads, not for Communism, but for Socialism. Then why did he drag in Miss Krupp's trousseau?

The Slavery of Socialism.

Let me, however, discuss with him Socialism as it is understood by its modern exponents. It has been defined by a Trade Union Congress as "the nationalisation of all the means of production, distribution, and exchange." Consider what this would mean to the small trader, the small investor, the worker on a small scale. No more private factories, no more private shops, no more home industries. Every man, woman, child a bondslave of that relentless tyrant, our grandmother the State. No encouragement of individual enterprise, no hope for legitimate ambitions—one dead level of drudgery and despair.

The Tyranny of Taxation.

And what is the proposed compensation? The gratuitous provision of many things which we do not all require? Some of us do not want to travel in trains, or frequent theatres, or eat municipal breakfasts, or haunt public libraries. But we are to pay for these luxuries in meal or in malt, in money or in labour, whether we like them or not. Remember this: that Socialism is the negation of liberty. Not only does it interfere with the liberty of a man to act as he pleases, but also with his right to spend his money as he pleases. Again and again, when canvassing at Deptford, I met men who had been driven from home and forced to live in lodgings solely on account of rising rates and consequently rising rents.

The Ideals of Individualism.

Individualism is merely the right of every man to do as he pleases provided his action does not interfere with the rights and liberties of others. Individualism is as much a matter of logic and common-sense as Free Trade or arithmetic. I observe that Mr. Harris, taunting some journal for criticising "the fraud of socialism," says, "it would be just as correct and just as urbane to talk of 'the fraud of Tariff Reform.'" Precisely! And so-called Tariff Reform, otherwise Protection, is part and parcel of the Socialistic heresy. I am not surprised that defenders of Socialism should turn out to be the apologists of the Brummagen bunkum.

Ignorantio Elenchi.

Mr. Harris's question, Would an Individualist repeal the Factory Acts? reveals a lamentable misunderstanding of the elements of individualism. Mr. Harris considers the Factory Acts prevented child-murder. Now, an Anarchist might not wish to discourage murder, but an Individualist would do his utmost to prevent it, because it interferes with another's right to enjoy life. Therefore, admitting Mr. Harris's premise, an Individualist may approve of Factory Acts. At the same time an Individualist would prefer to see the same end attained without State intervention. The State can never do anything for us as well as we can do it for ourselves. In other words, the solution of most, if not all, the problems of poverty lies not in more legislation but in better organisation.

A Federation of Labour.

I want to see a thorough organisation of Trade Unions, which shall be a true representative Parliament of Labour, which shall federate all the unskilled, and as yet unorganised, classes of Labour, and which shall extort by concerted action all the reasonable demands of the workers. This would be far more effective than to rely upon the adventitious aids of socialistic legislation. I trust the people because I know that they are too wise to commit themselves to the follies of Socialism. They know that Socialism is the negation of liberty and economy, those two great principles for which their ancestors fought and died. A handful of unscrupulous charlatans have captured the organisation of ephemeral parties, which pretend to represent Labour. They have cozened the Trade Unions out of illegal levies, but not for long. They may cheat a few people for a short time, but they cannot fool all the people all the time. The workers now know that their only hope of salvation lies in support of the Liberal party, and by their help the Liberal party will continue to triumph.

I was warned not to write this article lest I should offend the Labour Party at the next election. My answer is that at (or, at least, after) the next election there will be no Labour Party.

THE HUGH WATT CASE.

Since the announcement of the Home Secretary that he had decided to reduce the sentence passed upon Mr. Hugh Watt, from five years' to twelve months', we have been endeavouring to secure the unfortunate gentleman the benefit of the "good marks" he has earned in prison; and on September 21st we wrote to Mr. Gladstone urging this claim upon him. The following is his reply:—

September 26th, 1906.

Dear Mr. Bottomley,—I have received your letter of the 21st inst. relating to the date on which Mr. Hugh Watt is to leave prison. After very careful consideration and consultation with the learned Judge by whom the case was tried, I decided that Watt is to be released on license after he has actually served one whole year in prison.

The earning of marks will not, therefore, entitle him to an earlier release.

Yours very truly,
W. H. Gladstone.

Horatio Bottomley, Esq., M.P.

We refer to the subject elsewhere.

A Merry Christmas for "John Bull" Readers.—*For particulars of our Great Christmas-Box Scheme see page 2 of cover. One Thousand £5 Notes for "John Bull" readers. No competition, but equal opportunity for all. No reason whatever why you should not have a £5 Note on Christmas Eve. Please read page 2 of cover. It will interest you. The scheme is unique. And it is honest and genuine.*

John Bull's Christmas-Box Scheme—*See Page 2 of Cover.*

FOR JOHN BULL'S WOMEN-FOLK.

By Mrs. Bull.

[*Mrs. Bull will be pleased to receive, from her women readers, suggestions and contributions for this page.*]

Our American Cousins.

The influx of Americans in London this summer has been greater than ever, and many, I hear, who intended returning to the States at the end of August, were obliged to postpone their departure until two or three weeks later, owing to the crowded state of the boats. The inquiring nature of the American woman, ever on the *qui vive* for information, has won quite a reputation, and an English friend of mine, who is also fond of knowing the whys and wherefores, has more than once been asked if she were American, "because," in explanation, "you ask so many questions."

"Kind Hearts are more than Coronets."

It is the trifles that tell, and the little things that make up life. In our daily contact one with another, in this workaday world, courtesy and consideration count for much. Is it not Hood who says, "Evil is wrought by want of thought as well as want of heart"? That is so. But to the point. I am thinking of two incidents of which I was recently an eye-witness one rainy day. The omnibus in which I happened to be travelling was full, and in one of the corner seats next the door was a gentleman with an umbrella, while mounting to the roof was a girl without one, and wearing a thin blouse. After the omnibus had re-started, the man, with unusual consideration from a stranger to a stranger, despatched the conductor to the roof with the umbrella, as a loan to the girl. That was courtesy number one. Later on, during another halt, a woman with a baby in her arms was about to enter the omnibus, but, discovering that it was full, returned to the pavement, standing in the downpour. A girl with a kind heart, who had at that moment taken a seat among the passengers, at once jumped out, gave up her place to the woman, and remarked kindly that the next omnibus would do just as well for her. If the wheels of life were more frequntly lubricated with sweet oil such as this, they would work more smoothly.

The Sacred Cat.

Though cat-worship is out of date, the old faith in the luck of the black cat still holds good. Most theatres possess their talismans of prosperity in this particular form, and, oddly enough, cats are to the fore in two new plays now running in the West End. In "The Morals of Marcus," Mr. Aubrey Smith fondles a handsome black cat with a pair of brilliant green eyes—albeit we hear more than once that Polyphemus can only boast of one eye—and the entire plot of "Amasis" turns upon the murder of a sacred cat. It is well known, of course, that the ancient Egyptians held the cat in high reverential regard—so much so, indeed, that in an extreme famine they chose to eat one another rather than feed upon their imagined deities, and they even embalmed the cat in their temples, in common with the mystical body of the ibis. It was death to any person to voluntarily kill a sacred cat. It is known, too, that in the time of Hoel the Good, King of Wales, who died in the year 948, laws were enacted to preserve and establish the price of cats and other animals remarkable for being alike rare and useful, and forfeits were exacted from anyone who should kill the cat that guarded the prince's granary.

The Industrious Frenchwoman.

The Frenchwoman is not idle. She is one of the most diligent of her sex, and her industriousness was brought home to many an English visitor to Dieppe during the past season. At the concerts, on the Plage, and elsewhere, she was to be seen filling up the moments in the execution of dainty hand-embroidery—everywhere her needlework accompanied her, and in this way she got through quantities of broderie Anglaise and other delicate stitchery. Another thing that struck one was the smartness of the French girl. She is so *bien soignée*, from the crown of her head to the tip of her toe, and is so bright-looking withal. She has character of appearance, even though she may not be quite so strictly pretty as the English girl. And as to the women of France—well, you may look round a well-filled concert-room and you will not find a face among the feminine congregation that is not inspired by intelligence. Frenchwomen avoid dulness of expression—and that is the secret of their charm. Dulness is unforgivable.

The Latest Fashion Tips.

The modish woman is now, it seems, distinguished by the tilt of her hat. Unless the new hat is adjusted "just so," and tilted at precisely the right degree, the wearer lacks the hall-mark of fashion. Bandeaux are higher than ever, and are packed with ribbons and tulle—loops of ribbon are newer than rosettes, and brown is the favourite colour for tulle, because brown hair is fashionable. The mixture of black and brown is not, as a rule, well chosen, but brown tulle—when the hair agrees in colour—heaped beneath a black hat, is very smart. In any case the tulle should match the hair, according to the latest whim of fashion. In contrast to the large picture hats of the season, with sweeping plumes travelling on to the coiffure, are quaint little Pierrot caps of soft felt, with a shaded tip at the left side and a big buckle or button holding the stem. The new sac coat is a simple, unpretentious affair, with rounded corners falling over the hips, and gently curved seams suggesting the fall of the waist, the neck bearing a small turned-back collar faced with velvet or embroidery. Waistcoats of cloth, or silk, beautified by embroidery in fine braids and silks, are important factors in the production of boleros and Eton coats.

The Oldest Bracelet in the World.

The fashion of wearing jewellery is as old as the hills, and has been followed by civilised and uncivilised countries alike. The first bracelet of which we have knowledge dates back, I believe, to about 5000 years B.C., and was made of gold beads, twisted gold tubes, amethysts, and turquoises. I have seen a copy of this pre-historic bracelet in a West-End jeweller's window, and the legend runs that the original was on the arm of the mummy of Queen Teta (1st Dynasty), at Abydos. At the time when the ancient tombs were plundered the mummy was broken up, and part of the forearm hidden in the wall. Afterwards the tomb was turned into a shrine, and for over a thousand years people worshipped there; but although thousands must have passed within a few feet of the relic, it remained unnoticed until the Copts destroyed the shrine, and some workmen discovered the hidden forearm and took it to Professor Petrie, who, on removing the bandage, brought to light the antique bracelet which is said to be the oldest in the world and the earliest specimen of female jewellery in existence.

Sport and Art.

The Englishman is essentially a sportsman, and with him the love of sport rises above the love of art. It seems that in order to obtain a part in the touring company of a certain actor-manager-cricketer, who shall be nameless, it is necessary for a man to be clever in the field. At any rate, a telegram received by a London theatrical agent during the summer ran: "Send me somebody to play Laertes and keep the wickets."

A Witticism.

The ready wit of the American girl is proverbial. A belle from New York, in "doing" London the other day, came upon a picture of a fat man in armour. "Tinned beef," was the impulsive remark, as she passed on her way rejoicing.

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JOHN BULL'S PICTURE POST-CARDS.

[John Bull *drops a few post-cards to some of his friends and acquaintances.*]

XXXIII.

To the Editor of "Punch."

Sir,—My newsagent has sent me a copy of *Punch* by mistake, and I have perused it. Will you kindly inform me how you contrive to exist? Your paper pretends to be comic, but I cannot find an excuse for a smile on any page. On the first page is a picture clearly representing an excursion train. Underneath you obligingly label it The Excursion, and inform us that "Head of Family" said: "I reckon some of us'll have to stand, or we shan't all get seats." Well, if he did, we are neither interested, nor edified, nor amused. Why perpetrate such rubbish? Further on I read:

> The *Sunday Times*, talking of the crowd's verdict on the Boat Race, says: "Yesterday, however, they differed considerably—as, indeed, did nine experts out of ten." We should much like to know the exact position of the tenth expert.

The answer is that the tenth expert agreed with one of the nine. Surely any gaby might have known that. If you must be supercilious, you need not be silly. One more quotation before I yawn again: "*Au Revoir!* Mr. Punch (to summer). 'Must you go, my dear? The most charming visit I ever remember!'" I suppose the notes of exclamation are intended to indicate that a joke lurks somewhere. I will gladly give a biscuit to anyone who can discover it.

John Bull.

XXXIV.

To Monsieur Pashitch, Prime Minister of Servia.

Gospodine,—It is rumoured that the new British Minister has been instructed to conclude a treaty of commerce with your country. If this be true, I hope that he will exercise great care in his dealings with you. To begin with, we have had unpleasant experiences of Servia in the matter of treaties of commerce. After the Congress of Berlin, Disraeli concluded a treaty with your country—practically the first recognition of Servia by a Great Power since the battle of Kosovo. In less than a year the treaty was torn up by your friend Mijatovitch, who has always pretended to be an Anglophil. At his bidding Servia backed out of her engagements, and sold England's signature to Austria. I mention this because I espy a grave danger of similar fooling by politicians of the same type. You have already perpetrated one "Servian Shuffle" at our expense. We must not risk another humiliation of this kind if we value our prestige in the East of Europe. I may not go so far as to style you a rogue, but I do say that your career inspires very little confidence. And I am still waiting for an explanation of the fact that, not very long ago, you were living on the charity of a Russian committee, while now you are a millionaire.

John Bull.

XXXV.

To the Lord Bishop of Worcester.

My Lord,—It by no means surprises me to hear from you that there are forty-four livings in your diocese under £100, and only ninety-six above £300. "We give a man," you say, "an income that would not command the services of an inferior clerk, and expect him to be a scholar and a gentleman." Pray do not worry over the matter, my lord. The time is not now far distant when the poorer clergy will receive a great deal more, and the whole bench of Bishops, alleged descendants of the fishers of Galilee, a great deal less. The Son of Man, my lord, had not where to lay His head; and if He came to England to-day, He would pour scorn upon episcopal palaces, and carriages, and horses, and retinues, and all the trappings of the Church which professes to speak to lost souls in His name.

If the Vicars and the curates are poor, my lord, the Bishops are rich. They at all events can and do lay up treasure upon earth, and when the Hand beckons and the Voice calls, and "the Shadow, cloaked from head to foot, that keeps the keys of all the creeds," claims his own, hardly one of them passes to his bourne without leaving many thousands of pounds behind him. Bishops neither live poor nor die poor; yet there are vicars and curates—faithful, zealous, hard-working priests and gentlemen, who live on doles like beggars, lest they starve like castaways. But the coffers of the Church are well filled, my lord, and the Bishops dip their hands deeply into them. Five thousand pounds a year is your own official salary, for instance, and annually £15,000 goes into the private pocket of the Right Honourable and Most Reverend Father in God, the Archbishop and Primate of All England. In future, my lord, let others talk of the poverty of the clergy. Talk you of the wealth of its Episcopacy—or, at any rate, think of it.

John Bull.

XXXVI.

To Miss Edna May.

Dear Edna,—I must condole with you on the unfortunate failure of your ingenious advertisement. You are a smart little actress, and worked hard to earn your princely salary. Surely you stood in no need of further publicity, and surely you cannot have been seriously annoyed because your name was printed a little smaller than somebody else's. So it was rather sporting of you to add to the gaiety of the nation by your sensational resignation during the silly season. The result has been a fine boom for the "Belle of Mayfair," for the "Gibson Girl," and for Miss Phyllis Dare. Those two ladies and the managers of the theatre ought to present you with an illuminated address. Of course, you are now left out in the cold, but you may be confident that it is not for long. You have become an institution, and we cannot do without you. Best love.

John Bull.

XXXVII.

To Mr. Ben Cunningham, Brixton Gaol.

My Dear Sir,—You will doubtless have heard that at a meeting of the West Ham Council, the Town Clerk stated that he had never known anybody committed for contempt of Court allowed out unless he made a very abject and humble apology. Taking, therefore, this view of your pathetic case, I think you will be well advised to make that humble and abject apology as soon as possible, preferably before the time for roast turkey and plum pudding, or your family and your friends will miss you at Christmas.

You have had your stupendous joke, and as the Judge administering the law still fails to see the point of it, an adequate abasement of your corpus vile is the only alternative to your perpetual interment. The Judge may become absent-minded and forget you, it may be for years, it may be for ever; and I can solemnly assure you that, if you are waiting for the millenium, you will never come out. Martyrdom looks well in pictures, but I never recommend it as business; for in this cynical age other people do not value it as they should; and gruel, though nutritious, is monotonous when you get too much of it.

Remember that wise saying of Marcus Aurelius—"It will not be long before you will have forgotten all the world, and in a little while all the world will have forgotten you." So take short views of life, prostrate yourself before the Judge, come out, and give a chance to others who have more need of the food.

John Bull.

John Bull's Christmas-Box Scheme—*See Page 2 of Cover.*

A CHANGE OF RELATIONSHIP.

Uncle Sam: "LOOK HERE, IF YOU TWO BOYS DON'T STOP THAT BUSINESS, I'LL COME AND BE A FATHER TO YOU PRETTY QUICK!"

A BEETLE TALE.

By George Edgar.

"These social gatherings are a nuisance," said an old bachelor Beetle, scrutinising his reflection in a glass. "There's no end to them. It's either a Beetle christening, a Beetle marriage, or a Beetle coming-of-age. There seems to be no mortality among them, which is somewhat remarkable, considering the dangers of our kitchen and the size and flatness of the cook's feet. If you refuse their invitations they say you are getting old, old—fudge!" (powdering the extreme tip of his nose). "What's sixty in these days? With massage, and the usual paraphernalia of the toilet, there's no such thing as old age. It's a golden wedding this time. Fortunately, I myself have evaded matrimony—by the skin of my teeth, though," he added, a complacent smile on his face. "I have had, on an average, three proposals a day. Elderly females predominating, ugh! It makes one wish to have been born plain."

"Please, sir," began a meek little voice.

"Well," said Mr. Beetle, fastening the petal of a geranium in his buttonhole.

"Please, sir, your bald 'ead's expoged."

"Bald head!" exclaimed Mr. Beetle, glaring in dismay at the meek little valet. "Good gracious, I've forgotten my wig! Although the almost imperceptible thinness—caused, not by age, but, by extreme concentration of thought—requires no artificial covering. A scanty growth on the cranium is one of the marks of true genius. Ahem! you may have observed," he went on, as the meek valet carefully combed the wig into his master's hair, "that the Reverend and youthful Beetle Beetle has no scalp locks to speak of. It is noticeable also among the brain workers of the human biped."

"Your Odes took yours off," said the meek valet, admiringly.

"Ahem! a few perhaps. I begrudge them not. They were willing victims to the fire of my poetical imagination."

"Oh, sir, you just can scribe."

"I write as my soul dictates," said Mr. Beetle, loftily. "Kindly reconnoitre the kitchen before I sally forth, and see what the domestics are about. The prestige of the household, I fancy, are at the theatre."

The meek little valet squeezed himself through a chink in the wall, and disappeared from view, while Mr. Beetle leant back in his chair and sighed gently.

"If it were possible to find a female who could appreciate me," he thought, "I might venture to place my neck within the halter. At present I have only come across frivolous little girls and frumpy old maids. No, I am happier single. I believe there are few married males, who, if they had a chance, would not return to the halcyon days of their bachelorship. Well?" he interrogated, as the meek little valet appeared, breathless with haste.

"Please, sir, the hupper servants is retired, but the scullery maid's a-sittin' by the kitchen fire, a-splashin' hawful, a-washin' of her feet in a pail!"

"Goodness gracious!" ejaculated Mr. Beetle.

"An' the cook," panted the little valet, "she's a-combing of 'er back 'air with 'er boots off.!"

"Goodness gracious!" repeated Mr. Beetle in horror. "And where's the butler?"

"Oh, the butler is all right; 'e's a-shut 'esself in the pantry with a bottle of the prestige's brandy. But, oh, sir," he cried, hoarse with agitation, "the kitten's a-runnin' about with the Reverend Beetle Beetle's curate a-'anging out of its mouth, 'an the cat's a-sittin' on the banquet!"

Mr. Beetle fell back in his chair.

"Is the entire feast destroyed?" he gasped, disregarding the perilous position of the curate.

"Tee-total," replied his valet. "And they're a-laying of it again under the kitchen fender."

"Well, I trust there will be a plentiful supply of everything. The Horn Beetles have been invited, and their appetites are insatiable. Is there much of a crush?" he asked.

"He-normous! An' the company's a-scroudgin' together under the dresser inspecting of the presents."

"Ahem! Is my volume of Odes in a conspicuous place?"

"I seed Miss Scrag Beetle a-sighin' over it."

"She is always rapt in an ecstasy when reading my effusions," murmured Mr. Beetle softly.

"An' when I passed, she sighed all the more, an' I 'eard 'er say, 'Ha, me!'"

"Gratifying in the extreme," said Mr. Beetle, in a gentle whisper. "Miss Scrag Beetle is blest with intelligence which ranks higher than the ordinary female. I've seen that tender creature" went on Mr. Beetle, staring pensively at the floor "positively weep over those touching verses of mine 'The Crushed Beetle.'"

"She ain't a beauty," remarked the meek little valet; "an' 'er jints are nobbly."

"Her looks are nothing to boast of," mused Mr. Beetle, thoughtfully, "but what is beauty? It is a mere husk, a fragile shell. Miss Scrag Beetle possesses a plain exterior which covers an intense soul. Likewise, her property is immense. She is the owner of a spacious mansion in a snug corner of the kitchen fireplace, and a summer retreat near the front-door entrance. Yet, what is all that compared to my freedom? Marriage is a lottery, and poets are better unwed. Enough of sentiment. The banquet, or rather, what remains of it, is at eight, and it wants just a quarter. You will investigate again, if you please, before I show myself."

The small valet vanished through the chink—returning shortly with a sickly expression of countenance.

"They've com-menced," he cried, in an agitated voice. "The Horn Beetle's h'ppetites is ra-pa-cious! An' the Rev. Beetle Beetle's curate keeps a-swoonin' on to Miss Scrag Beetle's shoulder an' a-sayin' as he's expirin'."

"Most undignified!" said Mr. Beetle, "she forgets her pedigree."

"You'll have to run for it, sir, the kitten's ready to pounce agin. You had better dodge along the wall an' shoot sudden-like under the fender; it's safe there. The scullery maid's departed, an' the cook's gone to sleep with 'er 'ead on the kitchen table an' 'er feet on the flour-tub."

"Dear, dear, dear," said Mr. Beetle, faintly, "precipitation is so detrimental to a proper deportment. What is that ferocious quadruped doing now?"

"It's a-squirmin' arter 'is own tail," answered the valet, peeping into the kitchen. "Now's yer chance, Sir, cut!"

Mr. Beetle carefully gathered up his wings and proceeded to run in as genteel a manner possible under such trying circumstances, while the meek valet kept one eye on his master and the other on the kitten.

"'E's a-comin', Sir," shrieked the valet.

Mr. Beetle dropped his wings and fled under the kitchen fender in a state of moist heat—not conducive to a becoming and graceful entrance into polite society.

"I must apologise for my tardy—and, I fear—somewhat hasty appearance," panted Mr. Beetle, shaking hands with the host and hostess—two decrepit old beetles sitting at the head of the table—"but our roads are at present in a most dangerous——"

"Four courses over," snapped the decrepit old male, regarding him sternly with a decaying eye.

"And now there's nothing left but dust and ashes," wheezed his decrepit wife. She was such an ancient female, that, if she had not been swathed and bandaged to her seat, she must have fallen to pieces.

"We commenced with mulligatawny," went on the decrepit male in a soupy voice. "Then came cod, etc., lobster sauce and whelks. There were also oyster patties, fried soles, and——"

"Crab," mumbled his wife in unctuous tones, "I had a bit of 'im."

Mr. Beetle made a quick movement towards his chair, but he was buttonholed by the decrepit male.

"The game—my good sir, the game——"

"Was a dream," came from the swathed bundle at his side, "I wish I'd eaten more." The last word began in a deep bass and rose to a plaintive wail of regret.

"And now," continued the decrepit old Beetle languidly——"

"And now," added his wife, thickly, "the world seems 'ollow and tombstones are our only consolation."

The two old things fell back in their chairs and wept silently.

Mr. Beetle cast an anxious eye over the table as he seated himself next Miss Scrag Beetle.

"Dear, dear, dear!" he sighed, "I see nothing to tempt my fastidious and delicate appetite. Truly, the Ephesians have devastated like wolves."

"You are late," simpered Miss Scrag Beetle. "How fortunate it is" (smiling tenderly) "that you poets subsist almost entirely upon air."

"We are still in our mortal coils," said Mr. Beetle, reproachfully, "and without sustenance of a—ahem—tasty and satisfying nature, all mortal coils perish."

"How beautifully expressed!" murmured Miss Scrag Beetle.

"Try a soufle," suggested the Reverend Beetle Beetle's

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curate, faintly, "or a bit of pineapple, or a——" His voice died away in a feeble moan. "I wish I did not feel so ill."

"I, myself," chirped a soft little voice, "have partaken of a most excellent repast. I sampled all the dishes—they were delicious!"

Mr. Beetle glanced fearfully at the lady on his left—a small comfortable person, sleek and plump, with the good things of life.

"The widow!" he gasped, "I shall never escape. I can see an offer of marriage in her eye."

"A recherché banquet, such as this," continued the soft voice, "makes me think of my beloved seventh."

Mr. Beetle shuddered. "Miss Scrag Beetle on my right and the widow on my left," he groaned.

"My beloved seventh," went on the widow, "had a highly educated palate—he knew how to dine. And now—now he is mouldering within the dust!" She smiled a placid smile. "I buried him last Tuesday."

Mr. Beetle became pale. "She'll ask me to be her eighth!" he thought, in horror.

"He passed away," cooed the soft voice, with a contented sigh, "through partaking too plentifully of the cold collation following the funeral ceremony of my sixth. My sixth was a dear, sweet creature, he had no constitution whatever. But, alas, my lamented husbands were a sore trial to me; they all detested poetry. Ah, me, how happy I could be with a poetical eighth!"

Mr. Beetle felt cold all over. He turned in desperation to Miss Scrag Beetle.

"Do you like my last book of Odes?" he asked, wildly.

Miss Scrag Beetle fondly imagined that the frenzied expression in Mr. Beetle's eyes meant intense jealousy because of her solicitude on behalf of the Reverend Beetle Beetle's curate, whose collapsed condition required frequent attention.

"Ah, yes," she answered, "especially 'Give me thy beetle heart.' It is not difficult," she whispered, ardently, "to see whose heart is solicited. But, indeed, indeed, it is—and has ever been—entirely thine!"

Mr. Beetle broke into a profuse perspiration. "My doom is sealed!" he wailed.

"Be mine, be mine!" chirped the widow.

"Be mine, be mine!" cried Miss Scrag Beetle.

Mr. Beetle started to his feet, gesticulating franticly, and overturning his chair in desperation.

"The superfluity of the female sex becomes unbearable," he muttered.

"What's that? what's that?" exclaimed the decrepit old host, in alarm, suddenly awaking and rolling his sleepy eyes round the table, "has a pipe burst?"

"Save the females!" spluttered the decrepit old hostess, drowsily; "they can't swim."

"It's nothing, Sir, nothing, I assure you," said Mr. Beetle, picking up the chair and sitting down trembling with agitation.

"Then, if the cook still slumbers," said the host, "we'll adjourn to——"

"The coal-hole," gasped the swathed bundle, snappishly.

"Ahem, the reception room," went on the host, giving a withering glance at his decrepit old wife. "Our guests may like to inspect the presents."

"Rum old lot," wheezed the hostess, "someone gave me a respirator!"

"It belonged to my dear departed seventh," whispered the widow to Mr. Beetle, with a tender smile. "I trust my prospective eighth respires with ease."

"A golden wedding seldom occurs in the beetle world," crackled the decrepit old host, sighing, "owing, probably, to the human biped's thoughtlessly heavy tread, and——"

"Insect powder!" snapped his wife.

"Ahem, I was about to add"—looking disdainfully at the antiquated old female—"the kitten's unpleasant fondness for beetle flesh."

"Drat it!" wheezed the old female fiercely; "and drat everybody!"

"My wife and I are quite overcome," he resumed, "at the remarkable generosity shown to us on this very auspicious occasion. Some of the presents being exceedingly——"

"Cheap and useless," grunted his wife, fixing a vindictive and humid eye on the Reverend Beetle Beetle's curate, who blushed guiltily. "There's a bit of the cook's thumb-nail and a funeral sermon. What's the good of the last item, as if we don't know that we must all die if we live long enough?"

"My wife is extremely sensitive," explained her poor old husband, apologetically, "especially in regard to—ahem——"

"Corpses!" wheezed his wife, hoarsely. "Aren't we swept up by dozens. There's a-something flowin'."

The last remark she uttered with the least change of voice, as she sank back in her chair in a state of sour resignation.

"It's an inundation!" shrieked the Reverend Beetle Beetle's curate, jumping up in alarm, "where's a life-belt?"

"We'll all go down together!" screamed the widow, flinging one plump arm round Mr. Beetle and clasping the terrified curate's neck tightly with the other. "I'll expire with my poetical eighth and my pious ninth!"

There was no time for Mr. Beetle to expostulate; the rush of water was overwhelming, for the cook on waking, had indulged in a stretch, which had upset the scullery maid's pail. The beetle banquet became a wreck, and the bewildered and struggling guests were swept away in wild confusion. The only creature that displayed any degree of composure was the decrepit old female beetle. She floated among the débris in a placid and stately manner, really edifying. She whirled tranquilly amid the eddies. She back-watered mildly and with dignity up side streams. She sank with majesty and rose to the surface again in unexpected places—finally landing in a state of calm serenity, on a cabbage leaf, where she sat perfectly passive, wheezing solemnly.

Mr. Beetle managed to shake himself free, and had the gratification of beholding the Reverend Beetle Beetle's curate swimming with difficulty under the weight of Miss Scrag Beetle and the widow.

"Saved!" he cried, striking out bravely in the direction of his home.

"This way, Sir, this way!" The meek valet was tearing backwards and forwards, waving a lighted lucifer as a beacon.

"Quick, Sir, quick! a-fore the cook begins a-wipin'. She's a-puttin' 'er boots on, a-speakin' awful!"

"Dear, dear, dear!" moaned Mr. Beetle, crawling limply on to dry ground. "Is *no* one drowned?"

"There ain't a swollen corpse nowheres," replied the meek valet, "they're all under the dust-pan a-sipping 'ot rum an' a-dryin' theirselves!"

"Dear, dear, dear!" moaned Mr. Beetle again, "and the widow?"

"She's resuscitating the Reverend Beetle Beetle's curate, an' 'e's ac-cepted of 'er 'and."

"Dear, dear, dear! And Miss Scrag Beetle?"

The meek valet giggled. "She's a-sittin' with a bit o' turnup on 'er 'ead, a-be-wailin' of the curate; I think you're safe there, Sir."

"Ahem, and why?" asked Mr. Beetle, with dignity.

"'Cause I 'eard 'er say as 'ow she were a-goin' to be a blessed sing'ler an' live in a 'igher spear. An' 'ow she's a-goin' to leave all 'er yellow gold to decayed beetles."

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Beetle, as he crept into his comfortable dwelling-place, "what incomprehensible creatures females are. But, at any rate, I'm comparatively free from an offer of marriage so far as she's concerned. And as for the dangerous widow—well, my safety depends on the existence of the Reverend Beetle Beetle's curate."

He lived to a hale old age, remaining a bachelor to the end, in spite of the Reverend Beetle Beetle's curate mysteriously quitting the stage of life just as the widow was about to lead him from the altar.

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JOHN BULL ABROAD.

V.—A CONTINENTAL FLIRTATION.

By Barrante du Plessy.

In this case John Bull's name was Arthur.

The instant he set eyes upon little Michèle he was conquered. For nothing about her suggested pudding, or beef, or anything else that is wholesome and home-made. She was altogether a flimsy little baggage, with curly black hair, an eighteen-inch waist, tiny feet, and large, imploring eyes—just the sort of woman one wants to pet and protect.

'Tis characteristic of John that he never can love truly unless he feels a sense of ownership in the concern; he is ostentatiously possessive; sweetheart or wife, the woman he cares for must be his very own. He expects a good many things from her—exclusive attention, submissive admiration, and an enormous amount of flattery being the capital points. But when satisfied on that score, he throws his whole big heart into the business, and the average Englishwoman is generally perfectly agreeable to that division of profits.

But little Michèle was not an Englishwoman. So, although she really admired Arthur's clean-cut features and athletic figure, she would no more have dreamt of praising them to his face than of complimenting the King on the fit of his crown. And this caused Arthur to feel slighted.

Then he discovered that Michèle was in the habit of contradicting him flatly whenever he spoke. But when he remonstrated with her, she answered calmly:

"Why, my dear fellow, no lady can decently hold the same opinions as a man she cares for."

"And suppose that man is her husband?" asked he.

"Worse form still! Everybody would suppose her to be in love with her own husband."

"Oh! And should not a wife love her husband?"

"We may all succumb to that weakness," said Michèle, "but we have the grace to conceal it. Why, a French dairy-maid would be ashamed to make that immodest display of conjugal affection which your ladies consider proper. We keep our love for private display on this side of the Channel."

So Arthur, nonplussed, walked away, muttering something about "confounded nonsense."

Another day this ill-matched pair went to the races. Arthur dutifully followed Michèle over the race-course, sticking to her like a burr, at immense sacrifice of personal inclination, for he wanted to back a winner. He could not guess why Michèle was growing restless and cross, giving sharp, stinging little answers to his amiable remarks, when at last she actually asked for another man's arm and took herself off to look at the horses.

When she came back Arthur was brimming over with indignation.

"Why did you behave in that abominable manner, pray? When I take a lady out, I expect her to stay with me, and not affront me by walking about with another fellow."

But Michèle's candid look and aggrieved tone again got the better of him:

"And do you expect any lady will ruin her character and forfeit her good name by walking about with the same man for a whole afternoon? Then you are very much mistaken, and the sooner you get rid of those expectations the better!"

And, this time, it was her turn to stalk away, with as much frigid dignity as her tiny person could carry.

Well, to shorten my story, they quarrelled about manners, and they quarrelled about meals; they quarrelled over politics, and disagreed about sport; they quarrelled over everything and anything that could afford a peg to hang a quarrel on. But as each liked the other, they went on with the experiment, Arthur bullying Michèle, and Michèle teasing Arthur.

At last, one evening after a ball, being too tired to bicker, Arthur ventured upon the great question.

"Do you love me, darling?"

"Yes, dear."

Then, knowing his wish was fulfilled, he put his strong arm round the slender girl, and drew her little head to his shoulder. He sat silent, dreaming of future happiness, and not wishing to break the spell with useless words. But when, after a long while, he spoke again, Michèle did not answer. The grave, deep tenderness of his courtship had seemed to her dull, stolid indifference, and now, overtired by her night's dancing, she was quietly and cozily sleeping her beauty-sleep.

This was too much for Arthur. He went back to England, and now has a wife better suited to his tastes and requirements than Michèle would ever have been. But, nevertheless, he sometimes longingly remembers the little foreign girl, and he wishes he had understood her better, or loved her less.

As for Michèle, when she talks of Arthur, she says: "He was a nice fellow, but very, very queer, as all Englishmen are."

IF I WERE JOHN BULL.—II.

By Raja Varma.

[*Our Hindoo contributor expresses some further severe views on Western life and habits.*]

Since the appearance of my last article, I have received scores of letters from friends and others, some congratulating me on my outspokenness, and some abusing me wholesale, and seriously advising me to stay the flow of my pen till my return to India. Through the columns of John Bull let me thank them for their letters, abusive and otherwise.

If I were John Bull, I would certainly refrain from heaping calumny on India's marriage laws. Little girls in my native land are not married in the light of the knowledge of the denizens of the Occident. They are betrothed, and to a large extent Hindoos have to be thankful that early betrothal is still in vogue amongst them, in that they have not the ghost of a chance to duplicate the vulgar, brutal, low, mean, debaucherous, vicious flirting of British boys and girls on the King's highway, on 'buses, in trains, on trams, in cabs, at nightfall, at midnight, yea, in the small hours of the morning. Flirtation in Hindoo and Muhamadan homes is an unknown factor in India, and here, breach of promise cases are never heard of. Flirtation is a fine art in England, and no wonder this private school of concealed licentiousness graduates married folk through the university of the Divorce Court. There are mothers in England who blind their eyes to the doings or "carryings on" of their daughters, and when one young man after another is introduced to the house, mothers encourage their daughters in words which literally mean, "Lil, you do as you like. *I* did as *I* liked." If in India, a Hindoo girl, not a Magdalene or a jewelled Jezebel, should dare do such a thing, she would be taught a smarting lesson for life. True, "John Bull" is waking up in the commercial world, but it is high time that the Mothers of England "wake up" and train their children in the way they should go.

If I were John Bull, I would move heaven and earth to purify the Christian Church. If the Christian Church of England pretends to set its face against sin, it openly violates the sacred ties of marriage, and thus exposes its holy precincts to advertised adultery. A Hindoo regards the marriage ties as the Divine law of God, and should the husband or wife fail to be true to their vows, he or she is outcasted. It is not the dread

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of being outcasted that entwines two Hindoo lives, but it is the inborn, natural tendency of the women of Aryavarta to preserve their chastity till death. For ten thousand divorce cases in England, one could hardly find one in India, a land accommodating one-fifth of the human race, a land thirteen times as large as Great Britain. But Christian England, who sends her missionaries to convert the "poor heathen," shelters divorced people by re-marriage; the Church to all intents and purposes thus aids and abets such moral renegades. tigers to play tennis with the Seventh Commandment.

If I were John Bull, I would certainly take pains to see that my wife and daughters were not polished hypocrites, in Society or in Church, or elsewhere. Society seems to be a fine cover for dress-rouge-roulette-romp-do-nothings. As hostesses, most women are affected. Their talk is flippant; their actions frivolous; their domestic life a farce; a merry time in the hotels, where they vie with men in smoking and drinking, in both of which they are becoming connoisseurs. Like the dancing girls of India, their duty in the season seems only to make themselves as dazzling as possible, spending lavishly time and money upon their personal adornment. What for? Not to purify London, at any rate. The most humorous part of Society is that all the Amaryllises of the conclave appear to be handsome. Well, if Society dames of fifty try to look fresh and prim by largely patronising scientific rejuvenators, what will their daughters not do—false eyebrows, false hair, false teeth, and looking-glass rehearsed smiles? I thank God that this contaminating curse of Christian civilisation has not penetrated into the homes of India.

If I were John Bull, I would do my very best to practise what I preached, and to preach what I practised. The Bible is sent out to every part of the globe to convert those who are groping in darkness. What mockery! What an insult! What is the daily Bible of the English? Is it not the daily newspaper? True, in India my countrymen are heathen, but their religion—without the least fear of contradiction—is more sincere, more genuine, more soul-instilled than the outward show, yea, caricature of the religion of Christ. Temples in India are open all day and night. In Christian England, most churches are closed during week days, truly symbolic of a huge empty coffin, silent, dark, and dreary, holding the corpse of a dead faith. Religion in England seems practically played out, and preachers are constantly devising ways and means to draw people to patronise their churches. A Muhamadan, a Hindoo, would laugh in his sleeve to know how the Christian Church of to-day, in the very heart of Christendom, schemes to draw people into its fold. Moreover, the godless lives of the Christians in India is a disgrace to civilisation, a curse to Christianity, a stumbling-block to progress, and an eternal blot on the fair name of Christ.

GAMAGE'S AND THEIR EMPLOYEES.

Without turning ourselves into a Court of Law and obtaining power to examine witnesses on oath, we cannot attempt to arbitrate between Mr. Gamage and his shop-assistants. Mr. Gamage says that his arrangement *re* holidays was rendered necessary by the conduct of some who took their money and did not return. "A reader" retorts that, in the case of one man who did not return, moneys were due to him for commissions, and he offered to deduct a week's salary in lieu of notice. It is further alleged that no pay is given for overtime during the spring and autumn sales. Our correspondent describes Mr. Gamage's statement *re* full wages during illness as "an eye-opener." He cites the case of two sick assistants, who could get no pay, but we are not told how long they had served. Further complaint is made that a notice has been put up in the dining-room that all letters addressed to assistants will be opened and read before being delivered, which sounds an arbitrary proceeding. It is also pointed out that the firm does not pay assistants in full for their holidays, as food forms part of the wages, and is valued by the firm at 10s. per man. We must bring in a new Truck Act!

RAILWAYS.

By Jim Crow.

[*Our eccentric, unconventional contributor, Mr. Crow, gives his views on Railways.*]

People who prate about progress, without having a notion what progress means, are for ever proclaiming the merits of railways. If a line and some telegraph posts penetrate into a jungle or a cannibal country it is immediately assumed that the full benefits of civilisation have been bestowed. The innovation serves to convey arms, ammunition, missionaries, concession hunters, and fire-water, to the evident edification of untutored natives. Mein Liebchen, was willst du noch mehr?

Cousin to the Crinoline.

This attitude is a relic of that barbarous hallucination which found fitting expression in the early-Victorian mind. Let us survey the position impartially, and we shall confess that the railway is first cousin to the crinoline—ugly, uncomfortable, cumbrous, inconvenient, perhaps ridiculous, certainly not fast. Save along a few competing lines between great populous centres, a railway traveller is soon left in the lurch by mere motorists, almost by simple cyclists. He is jolted and shaken and starved. He carries his life in his hands far more lightly than the seafaring man or the miner or the caravan. Scarcely a single improvement has been made in the interests of his comfort, or his safety, or his pleasure during the lapse of generations.

Ignorant Investors.

Railways were the fetish of our ancestors, and some of the spurious glamour still survives. Usually, cautious trustees continue to invest the dowries of damsels and the mites of widows in a form of locomotion which is already senescent. I suppose the contemporaries of the man who first thought of a tinder-box were no less enthusiastic. Let us ask those trusting trustees whether they are convinced that a steam railway is the final triumph of expeditious traction? Disraeli dismissed the Darwinian theory by saying, "We were monkeys; we shall be crows." Well, I am Crow, and I believe that we shall very soon learn to fly. What, then, will become of the rails, which scar the earth so grossly? Who will patronise the South-Eastern Railway when he has the opportunity to soar? And where will the trust funds find dividends in railways when we are all in the air?

Locomotor Ataxy.

Few realise the barbarism of the railway. To gratify the admirers of an ephemeral invention, the face of the civilised world has been ploughed with streaks of iron. Venerable edifices have been destroyed without ruth, ancestral parks have been invaded, rural simplicity and rustic scenery have been deflowered, so that there is no avoiding the savage steam whistle save by retiring to a remote and friendly isle. Watt or Watts, or whatever was the name of the barbarian who invented trains, must be held in execration. His only lot in life was to minister to the minstrelsy of Kipling. Let us wipe Watt off our slate.

The Future.

Electric railways are also inconvenient. Tubes are to be discouraged. But they are ousting the old-fashioned conveyance. All tends to electrification in London, and will before long all over the country. But the wise man will not leap from the frying-pan of steam into the fire of electricity. To a simple mind it may seem marvellous to compass one hundred miles an hour, but that rate of progression will seem lamentably slow when we all buzz through the air with the velocity of a bullet.

Few and evil have been the days of steam locomotion, nor shall it find remembrance in the days which are to come.

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BULL'S EYES.

[*Being flashes of wit and genius from members of our staff—mostly after dinner.*]

Science Siftings reports that a hen sitting on some cold-storage eggs, recently hatched seventeen chicks, which, instead of feathers, were covered with fur. The *infurence* is obvious.

How countrified London is after all! One encounters Lyons' and Rabbits' everywhere.

A lady writer in the *Labour Leader* got her similes mixed up when she says, "In Paris I saw not one child who was not as clean as gold." Has she never heard of a gold bug, or filthy lucre?

Some say that Edna May be jealous, but we have it on the best authority (that of the lady herself) that she is not.

A chestnut tree in Portsmouth is in bloom. What a blooming chestnut!

All is quiet in Russia. Both Terrorists and Reactionaries are dead—tired.

In the Synagogue the Shofar is blown, and no one says anything about it, but when blown in the street he is promptly fined for furious driving and his licence endorsed. Sho far sho good!

A book on "Etiquette" says that it is quite in order for a son to give his mother away at her second marriage. But it is surely very unkind of him.

At the Confectioners' Exhibition two tables were laid, one to represent a wedding breakfast, and the other for a christening ceremony. Surely, a notice should have been hung up between the rooms: "An interval of twelve months is supposed to have elapsed."

A police inspector says that one of the old ladies who turn over the refuse in the streets is known as "Cinder Sally." But why not "Cinder Ella"? We don't suppose if you offered her a drink she would let a glass slip her.

A Westcliff dairy has issued the following notice: "During the dry season customers are requested to take as little milk as possible." Milkmen in London have a simpler method of getting over the difficulty.

A policeman having been killed in Livonia, a mathematical inspector executed three Letts, and promised next time it should be nine, and then twenty-seven. Imagination reels at this geometrical reprisal, so Letts change the subject.

Journalists in Congress recently advocated forming themselves into a trades union. The picture of pickets on duty *outside* "Peele's" and the "Cheshire Cheese" is alarming, but we are afraid most of them would soon disappear.

The temperance party at Croydon have been summoning publicans for selling diluted beer. It seems funny that they should object to water.

Mrs. T. P. O'Connor says a woman wants one thing in a man when she is 18, another when she is 28, and something different at 36. He does not let us into the secret, but we suspect it is a mat'r o' mony.

The Ameer of Afghanistan is only thirty-four years old. Ameer trifle, and yet Afghanistan is an old buffer state.

In Egypt there are about 160,000 more men than women. No wonder there is trouble with the fellahs.

Oysters cannot live in water unless it is very salt. We should like to know their opinion of pepper and vinegar.

We are told that since 1865 English Quakers have been holding their own, but that they declined rapidly between 1800 and that year. None of the other sects seem to decline much, and have rather a way of holding not only their own, but other people's as well.

The Duke of Devonshire has refused £20,000 for "The Book of Truth." We wonder whether the duke intends to give up politics?

Prussia is said to have over 7,000 millionaires—all men of marks.

Salisbury Cathedral has 365 windows. What about leap-year?

The Chinese Emperor is said to have seventy-five cooks, thirty physicians, and sixty priests. One physician to every two cooks and a-half, and two priests for every doctor. There are also seventy-five astrologers—one for each cook.

A Cambridge lady has made two quilts, containing 2,834,199 stitches. A stitch in time might have been added to make an even number.

The United States has 122 doctors per 100,000 population, while Russia has only 20. No wonder the Russian people are always breaking out.

Forty years ago an acre of land belonging to the Hudson Bay Company cost a half-penny. Now an acre is worth 35s. Thus has Hudson's hope been popularised by advertising.

Thirty million birchwood spoons are made every year in Russia. Not very encouraging for courting, if you can't have spoons without the birch.

Thirty-four thousand people paid homage to Shakespeare at Stratford-on-Avon last year. Statistics as to Bacon are being prepared.

Pocket-handkerchiefs were first made in Paisley. These must not be confounded with shawls, although both are good for the cold.

England has 140 churches for each 100,000 people. That is why so many don't go to church. They are afraid of crowding out somebody else.

Between the first and second cataracts of the Nile rain is practically unknown! This is the sauce of the Nile.

After a confirmation banquet in Tomassoff, nineteen people are said to have died through the fish having been cooked in verdigris-coated pans. Up to now the report lacks confirmation.

William McCarthy, having transferred his affections from Miss Guyatt to Miss Broomhead, the former lady has been charged with assault. William knows best, of course, but we should have preferred even a Guyhat to a Broomhead.

The architect of the Strand Guardians has asked to be relieved in connection with "the tender problem"—which in this case is painting and repairing — which, after all, has something occasionally to do with the tender passion.

Dr. Thackeray has invented a new method of learning music. He has been staying at the Fish and Eels Hotel, near Broxbourne. This is quite appropriate to one who has so much to do with scales.

We read: "Lord Glantawe on Tin Plates." We can sympathise with his lordship if he found them as hot as the Steel Combine wish to make them.

One of those things which puzzles a foreigner is "The London Irish Rugby Club"; another is the forthcoming publication of "Cassell's Brown's Dore's Swift's Gulliver's Travels."

Leonard Potter was struck by lightning at Birmingham when returning from a football match. He says he thought the game was over when he left the ground.

A man at Scarborough, who said he was a Dragoon, was charged with stealing a bicycle. Really, he should have gone for a motor-car. A Heavy Dragoon was sure to come a cropper with a bicycle.

In the height of the heat wave Mr. John Burns was seen rowing on the Thames. A cry rose from the bank, "Look, John *Burns*." But nobody succeeded in putting him out.

John Bull's Christmas-Box Scheme—*See Page 2 of Cover.*

A Yarmouth skipper has been fined for disobeying the harbour-master at Scarborough, and using bad language. It was all done by the Morse code, which can only be signified by dots and dashes. Now it is a case of remorse.

Lady Ernestine Hunt, who has started a cattle ranche at Alberta, says she is the first woman who has brought live stock across the ocean. She has evidently never heard of an alien immigrant.

Mdme. Patti is said to be going to make her "first and final farewell to the public." Sounds like a dividend in bankruptcy, but we shall not object, as long as we are paid in good notes.

From an educational paper: "Roast cook (young) wanted, for a London college." The young cannibals!

Councillor Cunningham, addressing Mr. Justice Sutton, said:—

> If you're going to send me to prison, do so now. I prefer going in daylight, and not when it's dark.

He went, and was daylighted.

Nobody seems to be swimming the Channel now. But we do not wonder. It isn't a level crossing.

In some parts of Wales it is the custom, before a coffin is screwed down, to put some bread and salt and a coin beside the corpse. The donors are no doubt well meaning. But it is dead waste.

Lord Rosebery is stated to be writing another book. We suppose the literary critics, as usual, will praise the Lord.

There is a shop in the New Kent Road on which appears the following:—

"Artificial Legs, Arms and Eyes."
"Contractors to the Admiralty and War Office."

Is the supply of the real articles running short?

A Lancashire man demands preventive measures against lunacy and marriage. Taken separately, something might be done, but as a rule, both are so closely allied as to render interference impossible.

From the Calcutta "Statesman": "Captain Blank, of the —th Regiment, has qualified to do duty with bullocks, mules, or ponies on field service." We trust that his new associates will find him quite up to their standard.

A German officer has been punished for compelling his men to scrub out the barracks with their tooth-brushes. Either the barracks were small, the mouths large, or the brushes strong.

It rained cats and dogs (and other things) at the Crystal Palace when Brock's fireworks discharged 50,000 toys from the clouds.

A shark has been caught by some French fishermen in the Channel, and one of our leading City solicitors is missing.

The Daily Mirror is going to start a Boy Army for the credit of the Empire. For the credit of the boys we hope Lord Northcliffe will not allow his recruits to read any of his boys' papers.

Mr. Hichens' new book, "The Call of Blood," is sure to be red.

The latest rest-cure for women is hopping. Surely a bit early in the season.

Judge Hamilton says he prefers a pen to a type-writer. The woman-hater!

Victor Canvin, a French thief, who had evaded an order of expulsion, has been ordered to be deported after serving six months' hard labour. We fear that at this rate Victor Can'tvin.

Dr. Edwin T. Ensor says:—

> Do not condemn your sons to a life-long slavery with the practical certainty that they will never be able to provide for old age.

That's what their patients complain of. What about *their* old age?

District messenger boys are now employed to guide foreign chauffeurs about the streets of London. Slow but sure.

For running a ship on a rock in Dublin Bay, a captain has been censured. Had it been a shamrock it would have been all right.

A boy can take more mercury than would kill a man. So that while Mercury Mars the man, it has no Sirius effects on Canus major.

A ladies' paper asks What is a perfect collar support? We should say, neck or nothing.

A new novel is announced with the title, "No Friend like a Sister." There is something to be said for this—if it is somebody else's sister.

Blackwood's have brought out a book called "The Safety of the Honours." Evidently, the author has something up his sleeve, the joker!

The American Weather Bureau announce their ability to predict the weather a week in advance, and hope eventually to do the same for the entire season. The President will then be able to go in for an entire new spell of weather.

We take the following from a contemporary:

> "Lane. Tuesday last, at 47, Eaton Place, Mrs. Lane, of a son. Mother and daughter both doing well" We are delighted to hear it.

A man who was employed to take an inventory was found asleep, with an empty bottle by his side. He had made some progress, for the last entry in his book was "one revolving carpet."

Instrument strings weighing about 70,000lbs. are yearly manufactured in Germany. And Wilhelm wants to pull the lot!

MOTHER
SEIGEL'S
SYRUP

By promoting a healthy flow of the natural digestive fluids, promptly relieves Indigestion, and by toning and strengthening your stomach, liver, and bowels, ensures their perfect action for the future. It is thus not only the supreme digestive preparation of the world, but a tonic of the highest value. For the stomach and digestive system it positively

IS LIFE

"Food disagreed with me, and when I did eat there was always pain at my stomach afterwards. I had dizzy attacks quite frequently, and I wasted away to a mere shadow. But Mother Seigel's Syrup completely cured me, and I am now in splendid health."—From Mrs. Chipperfield, 84, Russell Street, Dereham Road, Norwich, May 3, '06.

FOR
YOUR ENTIRE
DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

TAKE IT!—NOW!
AND YOU WILL KNOW.

The 2/6 bottle contains three times as much as the 1/1½ size.

John Bull's Christmas-Box Scheme—See Page 2 of Cover.

JOHN BULL'S LETTER BAG.

[John Bull *replies to some of his numerous correspondents.*]

Sphinx (Bradford).—"Uncovered" means without a hat. Jews put on hats to swear. We did not know that Scotchmen took off their gloves to swear. They may do so when they are sworn at. Information duly noted *re* British Supply Company, 25, Bristol Road, Ilkeston. Were *you* "astonished at their liberality"?

A. E. E. (Watford) likes us for our "refreshing sanity." "In this age of drivel, piffle, and cant (says he), a paper like John Bull is a fine tonic. Keep on the straight road of fearless criticism, jovial humour, and healthy inspiration, and we will soon have the paper bang in front." We have; but many thanks, all the same.

R. U. Z. (Weymouth) sends us some interesting literature from "John B. McKenzie, Stockbroker and Dealer," of 23, Rood Lane, E.C. Mr. McKenzie means business. In one of his letters he says, "I do not mince matters. When I wire, I say that such a stock is *going up*. I don't say 'I *think* it is going up.' . . . If you can send £500 as margin, do so." Then he has a patent idea, which he announces in this way: "*As to-night, too late* to wire, I shall receive *very important* news. (*Sic.*) I have made arrangements to convey intelligence by means of the personal column of the London *Daily Mail*. Look out for *MAC* (then will follow name of stock *to buy* written backwards)." Immediately on seeing this personal announcement, the client is to send a telegram stating the amount he is remitting. Now, unfortunately for John B. McKenzie—but perhaps fortunately for the public—an advertisement sent for insertion in the personal column of the *Daily Mail* in the evening—"too late to wire"—would have no earthly chance of being inserted on the following day. We admire Mr. McKenzie's enterprise, but he must lay his plans a little more carefully.

James (Hammersmith) defends the London Chambers of Commerce Employment Bureau, and points out that 10s. of the 15s. deposit is returnable at any time before an applicant is suited.

W. H. M. (Wem), who asks us to "xkus the nu spIng," thinks "Jon Bool the bst papr he has evr sen." We r much obligd.

T. W. (Isle of Man).—"Mrs. Bull" informs us that you can obtain a lactometer, for the sum mentioned, at any stores.

P. G. (Sheffield) wishes us to call attention to the disclaimer by the Reverend James Ninnis, the minister of the Thornhill Methodist Free Church, Sunderland, of the blasphemous tract about "Jesus and Co.," to which we recently referred. We have much pleasure in doing so—although we should have preferred the disclaimer to have been a little more explicit. To simply say that he was not consulted before the publication, that he regrets it should have caused "unrest and disquietude to many," and that it "reveals that the attempt to be unconventional in the statement of spiritual truth has its dangers"—is, to our mind, an extremely mild and qualified condemnation of the most *atrocious* piece of blasphemy we have ever come across.

H. H. used to send money a few years ago, under an assumed name, to certain continental firms, for betting purposes. Now he is astonished to find the London and Paris Exchange sending him circulars in that assumed name. He asks how this comes about. He had better address his question to the editor of *London Opinion*.

C. L. (Penge) sent £7 6s. 6d. to the Eastover Manufacturing Co., Bridgwater, for a bicycle, but when it arrived it was minus wheels and tyres. C. L. has written about it, but can get no answer. We will make inquiries. A bicycle without wheels is no good to anybody.

"Freedom" (Wood Green) is very much down on Raja Varma and his ideas of life as expressed in his articles, "If I were John Bull"; and he ends up a spirited letter with "'For East is East, and West is West, And never the twain shall meet.' Thank God!" What about our ally, Japan?

J. C. G. (Birmingham) reminds us that it was the Khalifa, the successor of the Mahdi, whom Lord Kitchener slew, and that he desecrated the Mahdi's grave just to destroy the superstitious regard which the natives entertained for his memory. We hope the practice won't spread to this country. We are having a very strenuous life, and we have the warmest regard for our readers, but we should like to feel that once buried we were safe from further molestation. We don't like the idea of such an epitaph as "He kept his head—till he was dead."

C. N. (South Norwood).—Many thanks. We will endeavour to justify what you say of us.

H. C. R. (Brondesbury) forwards us a batch of interesting literature relating to the "Nutriola Company," to which reference has already been made in this paper. The company appears to have got into trouble with the American postal authorities on account of the character of its circulars—and we shall not be surprised to find it in a similar position over here before long.

C. E. G. (Cardiff) asks our opinion of the London Association of Accountants, Ltd., which appears to be a rival body to the two existing authorities. We have read its prospectus, but do not quite appreciate its *raison d'être*. Perhaps the "secretary and treasurer," Mr. Henry A. G. Lewis, of 21 and 22, Balfour House, Finsbury Pavement, will oblige.

H. A. B. (Clapton) says she "can write both religious, political, and social articles on almost every topic, something after the style of A. K. Chesterton; only, please do not think me a copyist—I do not mean that." We do not care for the MS., and are returning it with compliments and thanks, but we think H. A. B. does herself an injustice in placing it after Chesterton's work. Of the two, we certainly prefer hers.

A Drinker sends us a witty article on "The Teetotaler," and we are only prevented by our temperance principles from publishing it, for it is very well written.

P. C. Lyel.—We should like to see more of your work.

George Cecil.—Let us hear from you again.

W. M.—The story of the hair begins very well, but is not sustained. Send us some more.

Gagool.—No, and don't want to.

Jayelel (Manchester).—Glad you appreciate our efforts. Will let you know about the "brain-brokers." The name does not sound encouraging.

C. H. S. (Forest Gate).—Go on "trespassing upon our valuable time." We like it. That's what you buy us for. As to the Pelman Foster system of memory training, better keep your half-guinea or lend it to the poor—or, if your memory is bad, as you say, lend it to us!

A Resident of Glasgow, who seems to have been somewhat less canny than residents of Glasgow usually are, received a letter last May from Fry and Co., "Financial Agents." They recommended him to buy North-Eastern Railway stocks, saying they were so certain of a substantial rise that they would guarantee the return of his deposit, with profits, within a month. He sent them £5, which they acknowledged (May 10), with an undertaking to bear any loss themselves. A month elapsed, and our Glaswegian wrote twice without eliciting any reply. On June 19 a London friend wrote to the firm, and was informed that he would hear again on the following Tuesday, "by which time we shall have adjusted the temporary pressure occasioned by the recent slump in American rails, and by our clients not covering their commitments." Since then he has heard no more. Letters are not answered, and visits to the offices of Fry and Co. at 34, Coleman Street, E.C., only result in knocking at closed doors. The Glaswegian's friend called at 9 and 10 a.m., so it may, perhaps, be explained that Fry and Co. are not early risers; but it would be interesting to know why they ignore the remarkably courteous communications which have been addressed to them. Shall we give them a call in the afternoon?

H. B. (Brighton) is dissatisfied with the Literary Correspondence College (1, Arundel Street, Strand), because it takes guineas and discourages the efforts of aspirants. Such discouragement may, however, be worth guineas. But we hesitate about the "oracle with swansdown whiskers and a nervous manner." Don't give him any more guineas. Send them with your MSS. to John Bull, and we will eat them. Meanwhile, make the swansdown whiskers into a nice soft cushion for your best girl. Or pull the swans down.

"Humber" (Hull), having been a great reader of our excellent paper from No. 1 upwards, now burns to become one of the huge army of our correspondents. Delighted, we are sure. Particularly, as he makes us blush with his compliments. He has only one serious fault to find with us, and that is that we do not come out twice a week. Why only twice? Glad you like the "absence of puzzles and competitions, tickets, medals, etc." You see, we spend our money in paying for good reading.

J. H. (Hackney Road).—Yes, we saw the cutting, and fear with you that the thrust hurt. Many thanks for your good wishes, which we try to deserve.

A. F. (Camden Town) suggests a John Bull League, with badges to be worn in cap or button-hole. Quite a good idea. We must see what we can do. All the enemies of cant will have to rally round us. A. F. shall be at least a Knight harbinger.

Admirer (Paper Street).—Glad they like us in Pretoria.

John Bull's Christmas-Box Scheme—*See Page 2 of Cover.*

SCOLOPAX (Bryn Awel).—Mad, we think, as you ask us. But evidently well-meaning.

MRS. ARRIET J. (Kingsland Road).—We are amused, but haven't you overdone it a bit? Some of your letters are quite well formed.

S. J. (Dalston) is too modest. He sends an article, pleading that if we do not print "a bit of rotten stuff" now and then, the public won't appreciate the good. All right; send us something really rotten, and we will see. But no eggs, please, until election time.

A. S. (Scottish Yeast Co., Glasgow) wants to know what yeast we use for JOHN BULL's biscuits. He compliments us on their splendid quality, and says they are "short, crisp, well-risen cracknels, easily digested." That is the yeast he can say for us.

W. A. G. (Brixton) draws our attention to an advertisement in the *Daily Telegraph*: "Speech is silver and silence is gold, but your latest move is dross indeed. What waring on women?" For some inexplicable reason, he thinks this has something to do with Messrs. Waring. He adds: "It looks as if they had been spending their gold and silver to buy silence." Unfortunately, they can't.

R. M. F. H. (Hereford Road) says the Christmas Box Scheme "jars rather." Never mind, it is all in a good cause. Quite wrong, we are not "anti-Tory," nor anti-anything. Let the best dog win, say we. Besides, there aren't any organised Tories. We wish there were. We might then see some sport. R. M. F. H. winds up: "Although I do not always like the matter in your paper, it has one saving grace, a very big one, it is so delightfully humorous. How do you manage it?" We can't help it. We are built that way, and it just oozes out. The "award" in the "Four Just Men" competition has been already made, and R. M. F. H. can get a list of nobility, gentry, and professional men thought worthy of prizes upon application to the Tallis Publishing Coy., Temple Chambers, E.C.

"CAPTAIN."—Why do you think Mr. Pearson wants a peerage? Why did you want a captaincy? And why do you write anonymous letters. Be a man if you can't be a captain.

"CURIOUS" (Barnsbury).—You will only lose your money if you give it to bucket-shop keepers.

T. H. (Wealdstone).—Why do you think whisky would move us? We drink nothing stronger than rum.

OYSTER (Birkenhead).—Yes, but we have made Lord Northcliffe (Doctor of News) notorious. He is much funnier as a holiday pier.

F. (Cardiff) draws our attention to a prospectus of the Imperial Stock and Share Exchange (19, Queen Victoria Street, E.C.) and particularly to the following extract, which he rightly describes as naif (he might almost have said imperial):

> "It is not always possible to secure the same uniform profit, as so much depends upon the state of the Markets at the time of operating, but we always make it a rule to secure 100 per cent. profit as quickly as possible, thinking it better to be satisfied with a *moderate gain rather than run any undue risk*, and this principle is always appreciated by our subscribers."

That is the sort of "moderate gain" we like. What rot!

T. M. (Tottenham) disagrees with Mr. Frank Harris's article on Socialism. He says it is nonsense to imagine that Socialists can abolish poverty. Do they want to? Their occupation would then be gone. He very pertinently points out that "Socialists are only practising a new phase of the confidence trick." We are not sure that it is even a new phase. Robbery is as old as the world or the hills.

J. H. E. R. (Louth).—Remember what Disraeli said about Protection: "Not only dead, but damned." Apply that to the case of your hero.

A. E. S. (Bristol).—Glad you tolerate us. Read "Jim Crow" and live for ever.

"SUBSCRIBER" (Chester) reports the following splendid bag secured by seven guns in ten hours in *September*: 1 rat, 1 crow (not Jim, alas!), 1 woodpigeon, 1 plover, 1 snipe, 4 pheasants (!!!), 7 partridges, 1 tame duck, 7 waterhens, 2 hares. We are glad to hear that the keeper escaped.

"HARMLESS" (E. Dulwich).—We should be glad to publish all letters describing efforts made on our behalf, but they would fill the whole paper many times over. We will allude to any reports of special interest later on.

"DAVID" is a poor tradesman. A man with £500 a year owes him £20 and won't pay. There is nothing to seize, and the amount is not large enough to make him bankrupt. What is to be done if we abolish imprisonment for debt? Well, there are various ways of bringing pressure. Can't you find some other creditors to join you in bankruptcy proceedings? Your case is a hard one, but it is counterbalanced by many hard cases of people who can't pay, and yet are sent to prison.

C. G. G. (Harrogate).—You need not fear that the Bankruptcy Acts will be amended before you pass your law examination in November. The pre-nuptial settlements cut both ways. It would be very hard on a woman who married on the strength of settlements, and then found they were worth nothing.

H. L. (Tondu).—Please do not cease taking in JOHN BULL, if, as you say, that would mean financial ruin to the Proprietors. We always welcome frank criticism, and note your objection to our use of the words "poor devils," though no irreverence was intended. With regard to Sunday observance, remember that rest need not be idleness, also that "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."

F. W. (Grimsby) commends our remarks on Jack Barker and the Grimsby magistrate, whom he describes as "a fishy lot."

JOHN BULLITE (Ipswich) asks whether the Page-Davis Company cannot, or will not, find situations for their "graduates." We are afraid it is a case of the former.

W. T. M. (Lewes) forwards us another batch of cuttings relating to vaccination cases, and hopes we will help next session to smash the vaccination laws. One of the most interesting cuttings relates to Mr. T. L. K. Edge, a Nottingham magistrate, who, in granting a certificate of exemption, delivered himself of this judicial utterance: "Give it her if she likes to be a fool." Such remarks disgrace the magisterial bench.

C. B. (New Cross) forwards us a batch of papers regarding the "Segno Success Club." They are, however, two years old, and the swindle has frequently been exposed.

CHARING CROSS BANK.

(Established 1870.)

28, Bedford-Street, Charing-Cross, W.C., and
39 Bishopsgate-Street Within, London, E.C.
Branches: Liverpool. Manchester, Bradford, Leeds, Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield Cardiff, Southampton, Plymouth, etc.
Assets, £11,36,249. Liabilities, £796,788. Surplus, £339,461.
Loans of £50 to £3,000 made on any class security.
2½ per cent. allowed on Current Account Balances.
Deposits of £10 and upwards received as under:—
Subject to 3 months' notice of withdrawal 5 p.c. per ann.
" 6 " " " 6 "
" 12 " " " 7 "
Special terms for longer periods. Interest paid quarterly.
The Terminable Deposit Bonds pay nearly 9 per cent., and are a safe investment. Owing to the nature of our investments, we are able to pay rates of interest on deposits that will compare favourably with dividends paid on almost any class of stock or share-holding insuring the safety of capital. We have been established for 36 years, and our position in the banking world to-day testifies to the success of our business methods, and to the satisfaction of our customers. Write or call for prospectus.
A. WILLIAMS and H. J. TALL, Joint Managers.

ALCOHOLIC EXCESS

Drink and Drug Habits Cured at home, in 3 to 7 weeks, by the

Telegrams: Turvert, London. **TURVEY TREATMENT** Telephone 1494 Gerrard.

Publicly tested before Medical Committee (see Press Report). The Treatment entails no inconvenience and, in addition to entirely eradicating the crave for Alcohol or Drugs, has a most beneficial effect on the patient's health. The *Daily Chronicle* says: "A remarkable success." *Truth* states: "Has had really good effects." Resident patients also taken. Consultations, personal or by letter, without charge. The medicine for each case is prepared by a Qualified English Doctor and can be sent to any part of the world.

WRITE FOR ILLUSTRATED 52-PAGE TREATISE (FREE), OR CALL.

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"REVEILLE" PILLS

(Popular English pronunciation—RE-VALLEY.)

THE FAMILY DOCTOR.

A POSITIVE CURE for

CONSTIPATION,
INDIGESTION,
BILIOUSNESS,
HEADACHE,
SICKNESS,
ANÆMIA,
SLEEPLESSNESS,
DYSPEPSIA,
ALL NERVOUS AFFECTIONS.

THE MOST RELIABLE PILL IN THE WORLD.

"REVEILLE" PILLS are sold by most chemists at 1/1½ and 2/9 per box. If you have any difficulty in obtaining "Reveille" Pills, send P.O. to the Proprietors, and a box will be sent by return, post paid.

FREE SAMPLE.

Name .....

Address .....

J.B.—1d. stamp to be enclosed for postage.

THE ALEXANDER MANUFACTURING Co., Ltd., 11, Queen Victoria Street, LONDON, E.C.

A BOON TO CITY MEN.

10 Minutes from Rail and Nice Country Town, and 25 miles from London.

FREE DEEDS.

NO LAW COSTS.

NO SURVEY FEES.

Land from £35 an acre. Good six-room residences on a large plot of land, with bath room and every modern convenience, from £285. Water laid on. Main Sewer. Situation as above described.

POSSESSION ON PAYMENT OF 10%, BALANCE SPREAD OVER 21 YEARS.

Write for particulars of above and estates in eleven different counties, or if possible to

HOMESTEADS LTD. (R.), 27, ESSEX STREET, STRAND, W.C.

RACING NOTES AND IDEAS

By W. Lotinga.
("*Larry Lynx*" of "*The People.*")

Things Change.

A few years ago the "big" men used to set the market; now the little fielders lead the more substantial men on the rails in prices. Notice it at Kempton this week end.

The Safety of Instinct.

Anyone seeing foals and their dams careering about in loose boxes would think that the young ones would be certain to be killed. Yet it is very rarely indeed that the least harm comes to them.

Follow My Leader.

It is noticeable how our biggest "pots" among owners follow the craze of running after some particular successful jockey of the moment. In turn it was so with Bray, H. Aylin, A. Sharples, W. Saxby, and A. Templeman, while, in consequence of his two or three successes immediately upon arrival, everybody is requisitioning the services of little F. Wootton, a twelve-year-old "nipper" who has had the extraordinary experience of race-riding in Australia, South Africa, and now in England. He is a good boy without doubt (although nothing succeeds like success), and has had the honour of wearing the colours of such patrician sportsmen as Lord Derby, the Duke of Devonshire, and others of our most noble, as also some of the cutest, owners.

Windsor.

When following in the wake of Newmarket with its "10,000 pounder," it might be thought that Messrs. Frail's little meeting would suffer by comparison, but everything worked out quite the reverse, for in most of the races there were plenty of runners, and more people, I should say, than at Newmarket all the week put together. In fact, such a crowd was quite unexpected, the reason, of course, being the bright afternoon, and especially the appearance of the Cesarewitch bogey, Noctuiform. The executive are still going ahead in doing any little thing possible to promote the convenience of the public, and we now had a new, most up-to-date judge's box. But a kindly-given hint will, I am certain, see an improvement in the commissariat arrangements on future occasions. The going, too, was really excellent, but the results what backers would call "wicked."

Marnes' "Double"

There is nothing easier than to be a sportsman when one has thousands a year rolling in—and training winners is like "shelling peas" when you have the few high-class horses and the right sort of people at your back. But to make the bricks (winners) without the straw (horses) is "the" clever accomplishment, and this is what Marnes has been doing this season with Rifleite—a bad plater when in the North—Milford Lad, and the very few moderate animals in his charge. His double with Milford Lad and Nemours at A.P. and Brambletyre's win are striking examples of his ability, for the sprint winner under top weight was dead amiss, and turned out for months, and Nemours weeded out of a "fashionable" stable as useless for a few sovs. I like these "working"—not kid glove sort of—trainers, and take my hat off to Marnes.

Don't Pay.

Objections are much too frequent, and the £5 deposit is, in my opinion, utterly inadequate, considering that people "plank" down a "fiver," and then go into the ring and bet in hundreds. After backing their horse to win, it can easily be seen how, if he is second, a cute coterie can save their money—or even make a profit—by lodging a frivolous protest, for rarely is more than 2 or 3 to 1 laid upon the "winner getting it." Thus, by heavy wagers, they cover their original stake, and can stand to win either way. I think that the necessary deposit should be £50, which in genuine cases would not matter, and in others deter people from risking it, as now, "on the off chance."

Racing Commissariat.

Complaints have been pretty general of late regarding the deterioration in the supplies, and the service, of meals at race meetings, which are done hurriedly, admittedly, but at prices that no one EXCEPT racing men on a racecourse would submit to pay. The fact is, however, that caterers are compelled to levy these extortionate rates, not alone with a view to enormous profits to meet the possible losses in the event of bad weather or a poor attendance, but the allround heavy charges which they themselves have to meet. It is, of course, a big convenience to be able to obtain luncheon or tea at one's momentary desire so far afield, and for such reasonable provision none of us who "go racing" object to pay a fair margin over and above what we should be asked in any of the leading hotels or restaurants anywhere. It is not generally known that the excessive prices are compulsory, mainly through the fact that the racecourse executives themselves mulct the caterers in such heavy amounts for the contract, running into one, two, or even three thousand pounds per annum. This, of course, has to be "got back," in addition to the cartage charges, payments to managers, waiters, etc., etc.

Sequences.

Some horses, or is it some trainers, seem able to run up a series of wins, particularly with one horse, in contrast to the unlucky ones who own a Best Light or a Chain Stitch, and are invariably second. Last season Love Song, although he did win one race—a maiden stake at Kempton—experienced the most aggravating sequence of seconds, generally just beaten a head. He was second again reappearing at Windsor in the spring, but since then the head and neck verdicts have come his way, and on Saturday, and again by a neck, he won his fifth race in sequence, although he has gone up from the 7 st. mark into quite the top-weight division, and being a welter, he now carried no less than 9 st. 10 lb. The credit of his success is wholly due to Mr. W. H. Schwind, who has been mixed up in the game of racing some fifteen years. He is only "a little chap," but a "good 'un," and one of the now numerous what I may term amateur trainers, the qualifying word being applicable to his status, not his ability, so that perhaps the expression "gentleman trainer" more fits the mark, for it was as an amateur that the young sportsman frequently donned his own white and pink cap a dozen years ago in an occasional Hunters' Flat Race. Since he started training seriously at the pretty up-river venue of Goring and Streatley (which we usually associate with regattas), he has had just a few horses, but been enormously successful. We can all recall the inexplicable improvement wrought in Castlewise, a gaunt old gelding who invariably looked like a brood mare. Within the last season or two we have had Fraxinus, the winner of no end of races; Kilteel, ditto; and, until he met with a mishap in training, the gigantic Hackenschmidt, whose sequence of six wins last season

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only caps Love Song's run of victories. Through the improvement invariably wrought in his horses, and the handicap coups landed by the little stable last year (if they are not even continuing to do so this) their horses in all handicaps were absolutely crushed. This caused the whole of his string to be submitted to auction last autumn, but one or two were bought in, and after the necessary lapse of time, and a little run of defeat, the skein of success has been taken up again. Truly, if one has a horse with any promise, Schwind is good enough to train him, and, as in all matters, there is nothing like dealing with a gentleman.

The Sezerwitch.

The exigencies of publication compel me to refer to Newmarket's long race exactly ten days prior to its decision, and at a period, too, when the market and the whole probabilities of the race are at sixes and sevens. It is a weak anniversary, and has already been a disastrous event for impetuous backers. The race looks like dwindling more than ever, and one cannot really pick more than five or six horses certain to get to the end of the course. I do not propose to analyse the whole race, but consider that the verdict rests between four. I should name them as Hammerkop, a real genuine mare, and no worse off relatively in weight than last year, St. Wulfram, justified in his favouritism on his latest public form, for he is a winner unpenalised, Mintagon, who is doing the right sort of work that Cesarewitch winners in prospect must do, and, finally, Royal Dream, not upon what he has done, but upon the great possibilities of his case. The last-named may hardly be a kid's horse. Heckford rides him, he has done well in his recent, although unsuccessful, efforts, and is very strongly fancied, for it was through beating Prince William just prior to the Leger that the last-named, handicapped over a stone heavier, did not accept for this race, which it now seems he must have won. Mintagon's form and his class are not great, but he has been trained for the distance. Hammerkop is never out of any Cesarewitch, irrespective of weight, for she is quite a 10 lb. better mare at 2½ miles than if the race were decided at the Bushes. If rain comes her chances are increased. Therefore,

ST. WULFRAM or ROYAL DREAM

will win the Cesarewitch, and for "doubles," couple both with Carnegie and Prince William.

Prophetic.

Kempton is a "ripping" card, with racing plums galore both days. On Friday it is worth having a little upon Carnegie in the Coventry Plate, in which Quinn rides him preparatory to seeing how he can handle the horse in the Cambridgeshire. The Irish five-year-old is coming on now after being amiss, and has a nice chance, his success entailing no penalty at Newmarket. His stable companion, Billidere, is also worth backing in Saturday's Nursery, while without discussing the pros and cons, for at the moment it is impossible to compile even a list of probable starters, I should plump emphatically for Polymelus for the Duke of York Stakes. This is his course and his distance, and if he shirks it in wait for the Cambridgeshire, the tip is self-evident, in which case the Alfriston hopes with Chestnut each way are likely to be realised.

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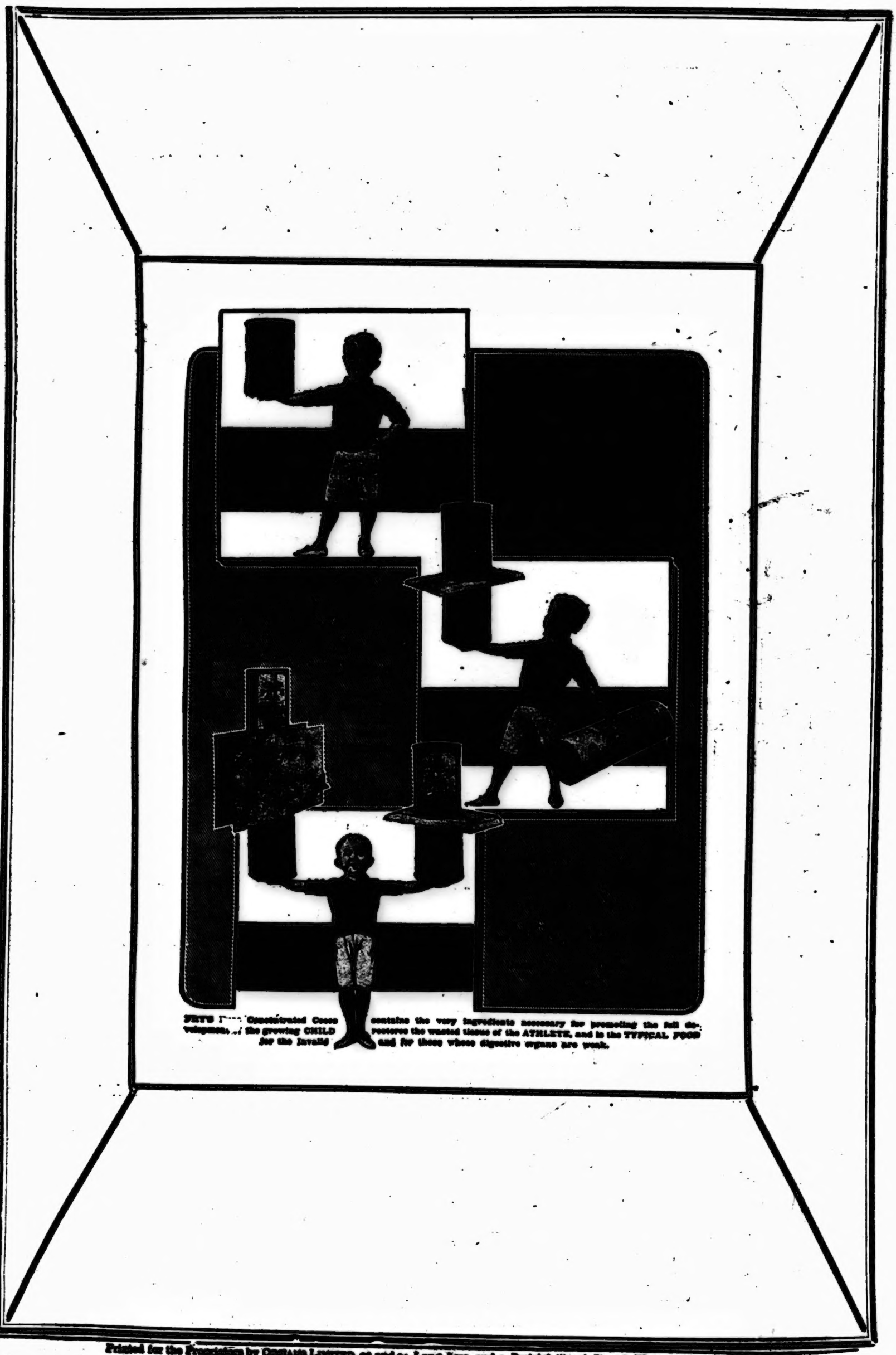
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